Enid Blyton's

FIFTH TELL-A-STORY BOOK

Rhona Park

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The ASTONISHING PARTY

ALL the children in Hawthorn Village were excited. They had been invited to a party.

And Dame Twinkle was giving it! Dame Twinkle was a marvellous person, as magic as can be. She knew all kinds of tricks and jokes and spells. She could tell you what the weather would be on Wednesday week. She could tell you where to find the first violet and the biggest bluebell. She knew where the juiciest blackberries grew and the finest nuts.

She was jolly and friendly and amusing —and how she could scold if she was cross!

It would be exciting to go to a party given by Dame Twinkle.

"You'll have to behave yourselves," said Miss Brown, their teacher. "Dame Twinkle doesn't like naughty or ill-mannered children. So be careful!"

Well, the children all dressed themselves up nicely and went up the hill to Dame Twinkle's cottage. Its windows were like her name—they twinkled in the sun, and the garden was gay with flowers. It was a sunny day, so the children hoped they could play in the garden.

Dame Twinkle welcomed them. "Good afternoon, Annie — and Benny — and Connie—and Dick—and Elsie and all of you! How nice you look!"

"I hope she's got a good tea!" whispered Percy to Connie. Dame Twinkle had sharp ears and she heard what Percy said. She frowned.

"Now," she said, "this will be rather a funny party, so be careful how you behave. There is a good

They had a lovely time.

bit of magic about the garden this afternoon!"

First of all Dame Twinkle gave the children coloured balloons to play with. That was fun! They threw them into the air, punched them when they came down again, and had a lovely time.

Then Gladys threw her balloon too near a holly bush—and it caught on a prickle and burst. Gladys burst too—into tears! She sobbed and she wailed,

and Dame Twinkle came running up in alarm.

"My dear child, what have you done —broken a leg or an arm?"

"My balloon's *burst*!" wailed Gladys.

"Now, my dear, you are behaving like a little goose," said Dame Twinkle firmly. And then a very strange thing happened.

Gladys turned into a goose! She did, really. She still wore her own clothes, but she was a goose. She opened her beak to wail, but she cackled instead.

"Oh—it's the magic in the garden!" cried the children in delight. "Oh, Dame Twinkle, Gladys behaved like a goose and she is one! Goosie-goosie-Gladys!"

"Well, well—you can't say I didn't warn you!" said Dame Twinkle. "Cheer up, Gladys, the magic will go sooner or later!"

"Dame Twinkle, do you like the beautiful dress my auntie gave me?" said Polly, a very vain little girl, running up to Dame

Gladys turned into a goose!

Twinkle. She twisted herself round to show the dress.

"My!" said Dame Twinkle, "you're as proud as a peacock, Polly, aren't you!"

And, dear me, Polly changed into a peacock! There she stood, dressed in her clothes still, but with a magnificent tail spread out behind her—a very fine peacock

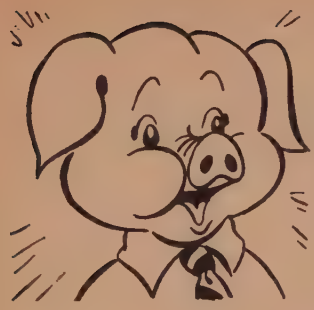
indeed. She opened her beak to cry, but made an ugly screeching noise instead.

Micky stared, afraid. He ran into a corner, and tried to hide. He was always afraid of everything. Elsie pointed her finger at him. "Look at Micky! He's as timid as a *mouse*!"

And Micky at once turned into a mouse, of course—a nice big one, dressed in shorts and jersey, with a woffly nose, and a long tail. He had to carry it because he fell over it. He squeaked when *he* wanted to talk.

"I say — we'd better be careful," said Bobby in alarm. "There's an awful lot of magic about to-day!"

"Come and have tea, come and have tea!" cried Dame Twinkle, and the



children rushed indoors. They saw such a fine tea, and Percy's eyes gleamed. He was a very greedy little boy. He sat himself down opposite the biggest plate of buns.

How he ate! He stuffed himself full of buns and sandwiches, cakes and biscuits, and the other children stared at him in disgust.

"You're as greedy as a pig, Percy," said Bobby. And, dear me—Percy was immediately a pig! There he sat, grunting, his little piggy eyes staring all round, and his curly tail sticking out at the back of him. The children laughed. Percy really did look very funny.

The children were told to help themselves, and they did—all except Dick, who waited to be asked. Nobody asked him what he wanted, of course, and he felt

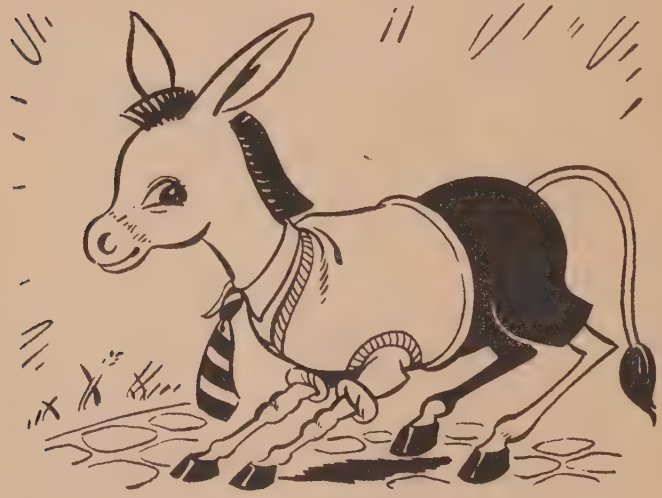
very hurt, and sat with his plate empty for a long time.

He saw all the other children eating the things he liked. Soon his eyes filled with tears and he cried.

"What's the matter?" said Dame Twinkle. "Do you feel ill, Dick?"

"No. But, oh, nobody looks after me, nobody offers me anything, and I've had hardly any tea!" wailed Dick.

"Well, didn't I tell you all to help yourselves?" said Dame Twinkle im-



A dear little grey donkey.

patiently. "What a little donkey you are!"

And he was—a dear little grey donkey, with big, long ears that twitched, and a voice that said "Hee-haw!" very loudly! The other children laughed and petted him.

"Shall I get you some thistles and carrots for your tea?" said John. "Dear little Dickie Donkey!"

John slipped away from the table and went into the field beyond the garden. He came back with an armful of thistles which he pushed under poor Dick's nose.

"Now, John, now," said Dame Twinkle, "you really are a monkey to go and get those thistles!"

And, of course, as soon as she said that, John *was* a monkey! A nice brown monkey with a grinning face, and a long tail that was very useful to him, for he at once jumped up to the lamp, and hung downwards from it by his tail!

The children squealed. What an astonishing party! Who would change next? Really, it was so sudden, you never knew what your neighbour was going to turn into from one minute to the next.

Fred pushed some food into his pocket, hoping that no one would see him. Then he could eat cakes and biscuits in bed that night. But Dame Twinkle's sharp eyes did see him. She pounced on him at once!

"Now, Fred, you take those things out of your pocket at once! None of your artful ways here! You're as sly as a fox, the way you behave!"

And a fox he was, a beautiful red fox, with a pointed nose, sharp ears and a wonderful tail. The children looked at him.

"Well—Fred always was a bit like a fox!" said Pam. "He had such a sharp nose, hadn't he!"

"Really, this party seems to be turning

Hop-hop-hop they went down the path.

into a zoo!" said Dame Twinkle, looking round at the birds and animals there. "There are only a few of you left that are boys and girls. Well, well, well!"

She started them off on a hopping race round the garden, whilst she went to wash up the tea-things. Hop-hop-hop they went down the path.

"Fanny's cheating!" cried Annie. "She put her other foot to the ground."

"You're cheating yourself!" cried

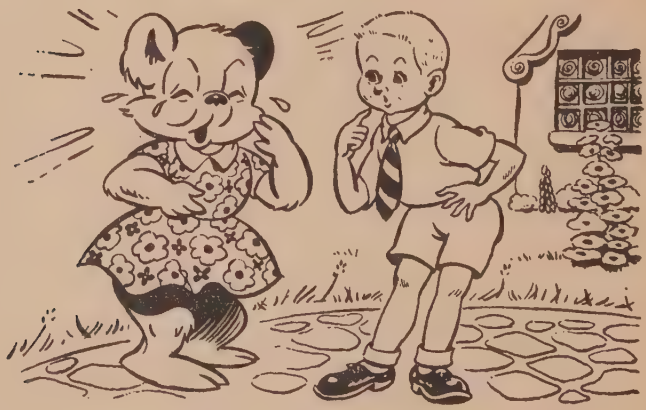
John. "Look at you—two feet on the ground now!"

"So are you, John!" said Benny, and he gave him a push. John pushed back. The other children hopped quickly ahead. The boys rushed after them to stop them.

"Begin again, begin again!" cried Annie. "It's not fair! Benny, don't tug at my frock. You'll tear it."

Annie smacked John, and he hit her back. "You look as cross as a bear!" he said.

And Annie became a bear—a nice, soft, fat little bear, with tears rolling down its



And Annie became a bear.

nose because John had hit it. She opened her big mouth to wail, but only a grunt came out.

Then the children began to quarrel again about who had won the hopping match. Benny knocked John over. Elsie pushed Benny. They screamed and behaved very badly indeed.

Dame Twinkle came running out, looking cross. Couldn't these children amuse themselves even for ten minutes without squealing and fighting?

"Now, now!" she cried. "Stop fighting like cats and dogs! I'm ashamed of you!"

Well! All those who were squabbling at once became cats and dogs—and there they were, tails swinging or wagging, voices mewing or barking, a most astonished lot of creatures!

Dame Twinkle looked at them all. "A goose—a donkey—a mouse—a peacock—a pig—a fox—a monkey—a bear—and any amount of cats and dogs!" she said.

" What a party! Well, I meant this to be a children's party, not a zoo meeting. You'd better all go home, and I'll save the supper lemonade and biscuits till to-morrow morning. Then, if you are nicely behaved boys and girls again, you can come and get them."

So the donkey, the goose, the mouse, the peacock, the fox, the pig, the monkey, the bear and the cats and dogs all went rather sadly home, wondering what their mothers would say when they saw them.

But you will be glad to know that as soon as they reached their own gates they turned back into boys and girls again, much to their delight. So maybe they will get the lemonade and biscuits to-morrow after all.

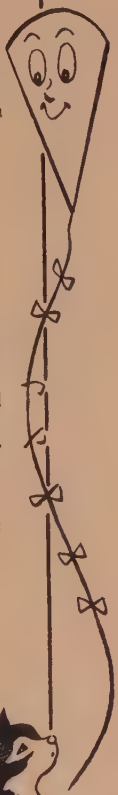
What an astonishing party! Do you think *you* would have turned into a bird or animal if you had been there? And if so—*what* would you have been?

RIDDLE-ME-REE

MY first is in boot but isn't in shoe,
My second's in does'nt but isn't in do.
My third is in donkey but isn't in ass,
My fourth is in master and also in class,
My fifth is in little but isn't in wee,
My sixth is in dinner but isn't in tea.
My seventh's in Elsie and Edith and Ben,
My eighth is in robin but isn't in wren,
My ninth is in you but it isn't in me,
My tenth is the same as I'm sure you'll agree,
My eleventh is found in a kitten and kite,
Now pray can you tell me the answer aright?

It's here in your hand if you know where to look,
Well really, of course—it's your own .....

(*Answer on page* 33.)



The Riddling WIZARD

THE Riddling Wizard wandered through the country-side, asking his queer riddles. If anyone could not answer he made them pay him a golden piece.

So the country folk were frightened when he came along, with his high pointed hat, and his flowing cloak embroidered with shining suns, moons and stars.

He would stop on a village green, his big black cat beside him, and ring a loud

bell. Everyone hurried to see what was the matter—and then the Riddling Wizard would get hold of someone and fire off his riddles.

They were always the same riddles, but no one could ever answer them. In fact, no one believed they could be answered.

The first was this: "Pick up a stone from the ground. What tree will it grow?"

The second was: "What creature has no wings and yet will fly through the air?"

The third was: "Bring me an apple that does not grow on an apple tree!"

As Jinky said, no one could answer riddles like that. "You can pick up as many stones as you like, but not one will ever grow a tree! And how can anything fly if it has no wings? And who ever heard of an apple that did not grow on an apple tree?"

"It's an easy way for the Riddling

Wizard to get money," grumbled Binny, the pixie. "He just asks his silly riddles, and then fines us a gold piece!"

But after a while the Riddling Wizard got something more than a gold piece, as he wandered about. He made into servants all those who could not answer his riddles, and soon he had a train of miserable folk following him, the black cat at the head.

Then the folk of the country-side began to get really alarmed. They held a meeting. What were they to do about the Riddling Wizard?

"He's so powerful," said Kirry. "If we defy him he will use his strong magic and turn us into hens that peck round his heels, or into snowflakes that melt in the sun, or mice for his black cat to hunt."

"What would happen if anyone answered his riddles?" asked Jiminy, a small goblin with a merry face.

"The person who can answer his riddles has the right also to ask the wizard three riddles," said Kirry. "He has said that

" I will try to answer his riddles."

if he cannot answer them he will give his magic wand to his questioner. But that will never happen, because no one can answer his riddles, and certainly no one could ever ask him riddles he couldn't answer. He is very wise and very clever."

" Well, if he comes here *I* will try to answer his riddles, and ask him some of my own," said Jiminy boldly. The others stared at him.

" You are foolish," said Jinky. " You will have to pay him a gold piece—and

you know you have only one, Jiminy—and you will have to follow him as his servant for the rest of your life!"

"All the same, I will try to answer his riddles!" said Jiminy. "So when he comes, let me know."

In two weeks' time there came word that the Riddling Wizard was coming to Jiminy's village. The folk there were alarmed and excited. Jiminy was the only calm one.

"Don't be afraid," he said. "I will be the one to face him, so if anyone has to pay him and follow him it will be I, Jiminy, and not any of you!"

The Riddling Wizard came. He stood on the village green, with his large black cat blinking her green eyes beside him. Behind him was his miserable

train of servants, who were kept close to him by magic, and could never run away.

The people came out of their houses. Jiminy was the first. It was he who faced the Riddling Wizard, and looked boldly at him. The wizard looked at Jiminy, and felt that it would be good to take money from this bold goblin, and force him to wander behind him for miles.

"So you would answer my riddles?" he said in his deep soft voice to Jiminy. "Then riddle me this! Pick up a stone from the ground. What tree will it grow?"

Everyone watched Jiminy breathlessly. The goblin looked down on the ground, and then suddenly picked up something

there. It was a cherry stone, spat out by someone who had sat on the green that morning, eating cherries !

" Here is a stone from the ground," said Jiminy. " It will grow a cherry tree ! "

The wizard frowned. That was smart of Jiminy. Yes—it was a cherry stone—so certainly it could grow a cherry tree, if it was planted. The wizard asked his next riddle.

" What creature has no wings and yet will fly through the air ? "

Jiminy looked into a nearby bush, where he knew many caterpillars lived. He picked a caterpillar from the leaf it was eating and showed it to the wizard.

" Here is a creature that has no wings, and yet will fly—for it will change to a butterfly and wing its way through the air ! "

Everyone clapped and cheered. How clever Jiminy was !

The wizard was not pleased, but he knew the answer was good. He asked the third riddle.

" Bring me an apple that does not grow on an apple tree ! "

Jiminy crossed to an oak tree whose shady branches spread over the green. He

The wizard was not pleased.

pulled a hard brown thing from a twig. It was an oak apple!

"Here is an apple that does not grow on an apple tree!" he cried, and threw the oak apple at the wizard in triumph. "Now I will riddle *you* three riddles! First, show me what goes as fast as the wind and yet makes no sound!"

"Easy!" cried the wizard, and before the astonished eyes of everyone he changed himself into a floating cloud, blown by the wind!

"Good!" cried Jiminy. "Now show me something so small I may hold it in my hand, and which yet contains something far bigger than I am!"

"Easy!" cried the wizard, and changed himself into an acorn which jumped into Jiminy's hand. Then, in a trice the wizard was himself again, and the acorn had vanished. "Was I not so small I was in your hand—and yet does not an acorn contain within itself an oak tree?"

An acorn jumped into Jiminy's hand.

"Good," said Jiminy. "Now for my third riddle. Show me something that is often whipped hard and yet does no wrong!"

"Easy!" said the wizard, and changed himself into a pool of rich cream. Everyone stared and laughed. Yes, cream could be whipped, and yet did no wrong! Alas, the wizard had answered all the goblin's riddles.

Jiminy had guessed that the wizard would turn himself into a pool of cream. Quick as lightning the goblin called out to

the wizard's big black cat. "Puss! There's your dinner!"

The black cat stared at the cream in surprise. She ran to it eagerly, and began to lap it up. A voice came from it.

"Stop! Stop! Let me change myself back to my own shape."

The cat took no notice. She lapped up all the cream, and then sat down and began to wash herself. Everyone stood silent for a moment. The wizard did not come back. He was gone. He had been licked up. Oh, clever Jiminy!

Everyone patted him and praised him, and the wizard's captives cheered and pranced about, for now they were free. Oh, clever Jiminy!

"You can have the wizard's wand!" they cried, and picked it up. "Then, if he manages to come back, he will be in your power."

The wizard never did come back, which was a good thing. The black cat settled

down happily with Jiminy. Jiminy still has the wand, but he uses it for good magic and not for bad. He was clever, wasn't he? Could *you* have answered the wizard's riddles, do you think?

ANSWER TO RIDDLE-ME-REE

Bedside Book

HERE are two ladybirds having tea with a bee and an earwig. Write down the first letter of each of the four things shown. Sort out the four letters, put them in their right order, and find something you can ring!

HERE are two oranges, two lemons. an apple, a nut and a banana. Write down the first letter of each. Sort them out, put them in their right order and find something you get at a party!

HERE are three little fairy people—a gnome, an imp and a pixie. Write down their first letters, sort them out into their right order—and find a big fat animal !

HERE are two cats and a kitten playing with an orange. Write down their first letters, arrange them in the right order—and find a handsome bird with a loud voice !

(*Answers on page* 47.)

WHICH CHILD ARE YOU?

THERE were once four children who lived in two houses next to each other. Lennie and Prudence lived in one. Kenneth and Jill lived in the other.

They were all jolly and merry, and full of fun. They went to the same school. They played the same games. But Lennie and Prudence were quite different from Kenneth and Jill.

Lennie and Prudence didn't look after their gardens and pets as Kenneth and Jill did. Their little gardens were full of weeds, and their pets were thin and miserable. Their cat came into Kenneth's garden to try and share the milk that he put out for his cat. And their dog often whined at night because he was cold. Nobody remembered to give him extra straw in his kennel in winter.

" He stands on the handle of my spade ! "

Now there was a small, bright-eyed robin who lived in the two gardens. He was always there, turning his little head this way and that to look for grubs. Jill and Kenneth loved him.

" He flies down and stands on the handle of my spade ! " said Kenneth.

" I believe I could teach him to take crumbs from my hand," said Jill.

Both children loved the friendly little creature, and hoped he would find a mate and nest in their garden. He did find a

mate—but he didn't nest in Kenneth's garden—he nested in Lennie's !

" What a pity ! " said Jill to Kenneth. " I do hope Lennie and Prudence won't find the nest. They might pull it to pieces."

" Oh, no, surely they wouldn't be so horrid as that ! " said Kenneth, shocked.

The robin and his little mate nested in an old kettle at the bottom of Lennie's garden. They made a lovely cosy nest there, of moss and dead leaves. They were very happy. The robin sang a lovely little song to his mate each day and brought her grubs to eat.

She laid four pretty eggs, and she was so proud of them. She settled herself on the nest to keep the eggs warm. She was very, very happy.

And then Lennie found the nest and the robin in it ! He gave a yell. " Hi, Prudie ! Come and see ! There's a robin here on a nest—in our old kettle, too ! "

Lennie found the nest.

Prudence came running down the garden to see. She shooed the robin off the nest. "Oh, there are four eggs!" she cried. "Let's take them."

So she took two and Lennie took two. One dropped and broke. Inside was a very small baby bird, for the egg had been about to hatch.

"Silly!" said Lennie. "Now you've

He flew round the boy's head.

lost one of your eggs. Hallo, what is the robin doing ? "

The robin's little mate had been very frightened and upset when the children had shooed her away. She had sat on a nearby tree, and called in alarm for her husband, the cock robin. He came at once.

When he saw that the children were taking his precious eggs, and pulling his lovely nest out of the kettle, he sang loudly in anger. He flew round the boy's head, trying to stop him from doing any more damage.

" Go away ! " said the boy, and hit out

at the little robin. The bird flew to the wall, and sang there in rage and fear. The boy picked up a stone. He was always throwing stones. He was that kind of boy. He threw the stone at the bird, and hit it hard on the leg.

The robin gave a cry of pain and flew into the air. His mate flew right away, and if birds could cry she would have cried her heart out. Her beautiful nest was gone—and her four eggs, which would so soon have been baby birds. She felt as if the world had changed in a few minutes. She would never, never come back again to that garden.

He threw the stone at the bird.

The little hurt robin flew to a tree not far off. But when he tried to land on a twig he couldn't. His thin little leg was broken. It hung down very queerly, and he couldn't use it.

He flew into the air again, singing a sad little song. What had happened to his leg? There was a terrible pain there, and he couldn't stand on it. How could he stand on only one leg? Why, he wouldn't be able to turn over leaves to find grubs, he wouldn't be able to hop on the grass for worms. He wouldn't be able to feed himself at all.

Poor little lonely robin. He didn't understand what had happened to him. Why had his nest been pulled to pieces? Why had his eggs been taken? Why had his little mate been frightened away? And why, oh why, had his leg been broken? The little bird could now only sing and fly, fly and sing.

But soon he was tired. His leg hurt him. He was hungry. He couldn't keep

flying any more—and yet he couldn't roost or perch. What was he to do?

He flew into Kenneth's garden. He landed on the grass and fell over, spreading out his wings on either side to save himself. He lay there, tired out.

Jill saw him. "Look," she said in alarm to Kenneth, "what's happened to our robin? Has he hurt himself? Oh, quick, Kenneth, let's go and find out. Poor, poor little thing!"

Slowly and carefully the children went near to the robin. They did not want to frighten him. He was so tired and his

"Poor, poor little thing!"

leg hurt him so much that he did not even move when Kenneth put out his hand. The boy picked up the tiny bird.

"See," he said to Jill, and his voice was very sad and yet very angry. "His leg is broken. Someone must have thrown a stone and hit him. He's almost dying!"

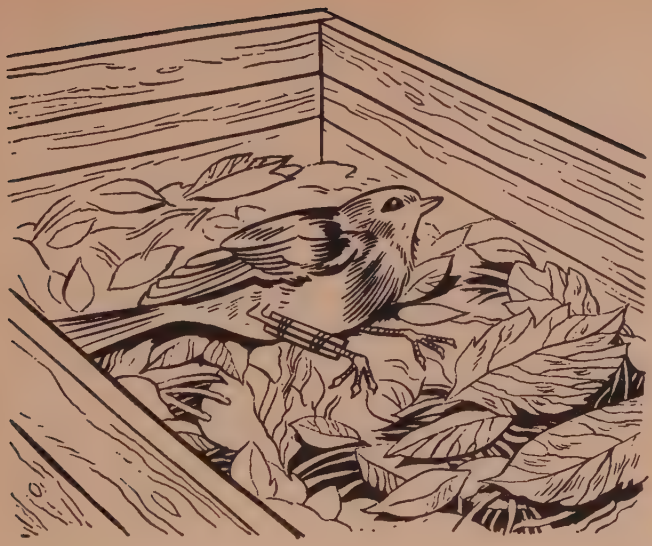
Tears were in Jill's eyes. "He's always been such a dear little bird," she said. "Oh, Ken, do let's help him somehow. What do people do when legs break?"

"They put them into splints," said Kenneth. "They put the two edges of the broken bone together first—and then put pieces of wood up each side of the leg to keep the bone in place. Then it grows together again."

"Can we do that to the robin?" said Jill. "We *must* do something, Ken, we must."

"You go and get two match-sticks," said Kenneth, "and a reel of cotton. Hurry!"

Soon Jill was back with the matches and



Soon it was bound in queer little splints.

the cotton. Then, very deftly and gently, Kenneth tried to mend the robin's leg.

Soon it was bound in queer little splints made of two matches tied together with cotton. Then the children fetched a box and put into it moss and dead leaves.

"Maybe it will remind him of his nest," said Kenneth, who had already been to see what had happened to the nest, and knew it was destroyed.

The robin was too weak to sing. It sipped milk off Jill's finger, but it could not eat anything. It put its tired head under its wing and slept.

The children cared for it day after day. They found food for it. They gave it water. They talked to it and hoped its mate would come back to see it. But she didn't. She was too afraid.

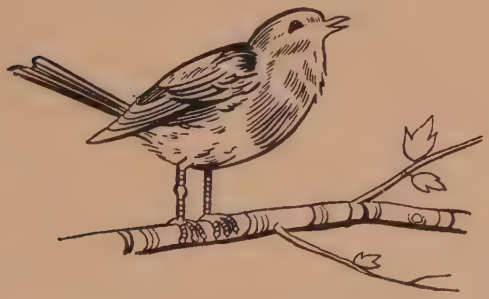
The robin's leg healed! The bone joined together, and one day, when Kenneth took off the queer little splints, the leg was straight and whole. The robin could hop on it. He could perch just as well as ever. There was a little knobbly bit where the leg had been broken, but that was all that could be seen. It was a marvellous cure.

The robin flew off joyfully. He was happy again. He would find another mate, build another nest, and have more eggs.

But not in Lennie's and Prudence's garden! He would never go there again.

He would take his songs and his friendliness to Kenneth and Jill. Wasn't it a good thing he knew children like that?

Which child are you? Lennie or Prudence, Kenneth or Jill? You have to be one or the other, there is no in-between. You are either kind or unkind, merciful or cruel, and you must choose yourself which you will be. So—tell me —*which* child are you?



ANSWER TO PUZZLE PICTURES

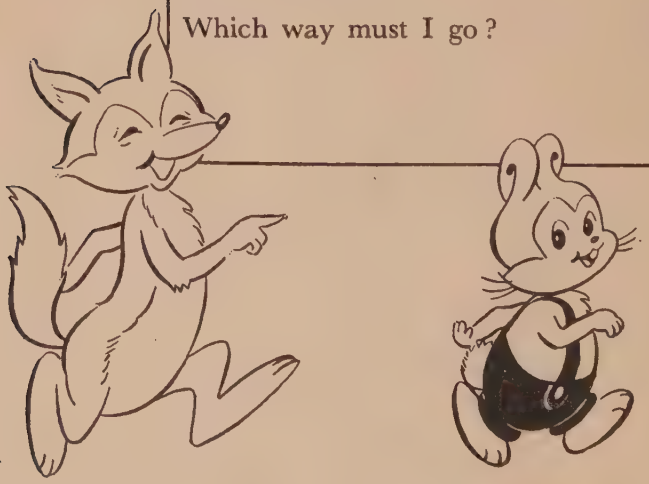
Bell. Balloon. Pig. Cock.

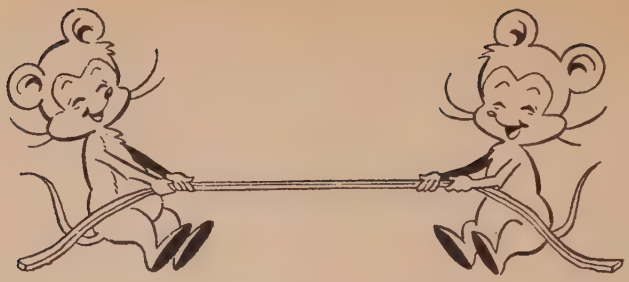
ANSWER TO "IS YOUR NAME HERE?"

1. *Irene.* 2. *Alice.* 3. *Eric or Erica.* 4. *Eleanor.* 5. *Beatrice.* 6. *Denis.* 7. *Thomas.* 8. *Alfred.* 9. *Vera.* 10. *Winston.*

WHICH WAY MUST I GO?

I'M a naughty little rabbit
Who stayed too long to play
And when a fox came slinking by
I had to run away.
Down into the rabbit-hole,
'Fraid he'll bite my tail,
Scampering through the tunnels
Still he's on my trail!
I must find my mother.
Waiting down below,
Can ANYBODY tell me—
Which way must I go?





A BIT OF BACON RIND

IT was midnight. The kitchen was quite dark, and the only noise was the drip-drip-drip of a tap that hadn't been quite turned off.

Two small creatures pattered over the floor. They could see well enough in the dark. They were Twitchy and Woffly, the mice who lived behind the kitchen walls.

Their noses twitched and woffled as they sniffed here, there and everywhere. They were hungry. Even a nice crumb would have been welcome.

"The cook here is too tidy," said

Twitchy crossly. "She sweeps the floor too often."

"She doesn't even leave anything on the table," said Woffly, running up the leg of the table as if he were a clockwork mouse. "Yes—just as I thought—the table's been scrubbed again! I don't like this cook."

"There isn't a thing to eat—not even a candle-end," said Twitchy, looking into the candlestick which stood shining and empty on the shelf.

"Well—we must get into the larder," said Woffly. "Come on—there's one place where we can squeeze under the door."

"I don't like the larder," said Twitchy. "I know there is a trap there. Once Tailer went into the larder, and I waited outside—and suddenly there was a squeak and a loud clap—and Tailer never came out of the larder again. I heard the cat say next day she had had a good breakfast off a mouse who had been caught in a trap."

"Well, even if there *is* a trap, we don't need to go into it," said Woffly.

"Do you know what a trap is like?" asked Twitchy. "I don't."

"Well, I do. It's a wooden thing, and there's a hook on it with a bit of cheese or something stuck there," said Woffly. "We'll not go near any wooden thing at all. Come on."

So they squeezed under the larder door, though they had to go almost flat, and all the breath was gone from their skinny bodies by the time they were at the other side.

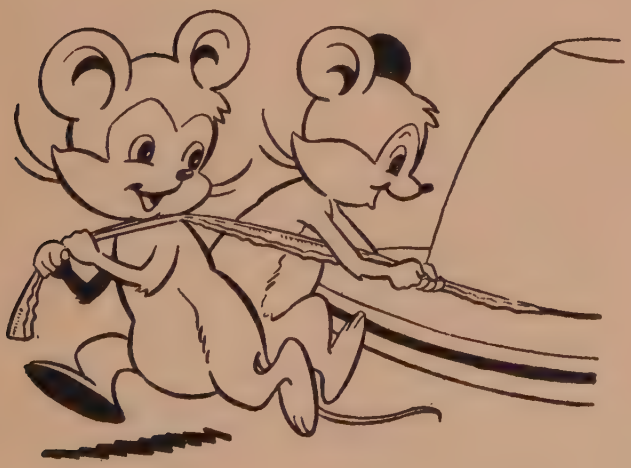
They climbed up to the first shelf—and they smelt bacon! It was put ready for the morning, and the rinds were neatly cut off to go into the pan to make cooking fat. But the bacon was under a dish-cover!

"Look at that," said Woffly, in disgust. "That cook has put the bacon under a cover. She doesn't trust us."

"Ah, but see here—she's left an end

of bacon rind sticking out," squeaked Twitchy, at the other side of the dish. "Come and help pull, Woffly. We may be able to get the whole bit of bacon rind out!"

Well, they pulled and they pulled. The bit of rind was slippery and fat, and it slid out from under the cover, slowly but surely. At last it was all out! Good! Now they could have a feast.



They pulled and they pulled.

"I'll bite it in half and we can both share it," said Woffly. So he bit it in half.

"There you are," he said, and he pushed one half towards Twitchy. But Twitchy pushed it back, angrily.

"You mean greedy thing! You *haven't* bitten it in half," he said. "You've got the big piece and I've got the little piece."

"No, I haven't," said Woffly crossly. "They're both the same size. Don't be silly."

They began to quarrel bitterly, as they often did. The bacon rind lay between them, uneaten, in two long pieces.

There was a noise at the larder window and Sharp-Eye the Rat looked in.

"What's all this squeaking

about?" he said. "You'll have the cat along in a minute, and that will spoil my hunting. What's the matter with you?"

The mice told him. "We want this bit of bacon rind divided fairly, and it isn't," said Woffly.

"Well, bring it out here on the window-sill and I'll settle the matter for you," said Sharp-Eye, with a grin. But the mice knew how hungry the rat always was.

"No, Sharp-Eye," said Woffly. "We don't want *you* to settle the matter for us, thank you. You're not wise enough."

"Well, come along to Blink the Owl," said the rat. "He's in his tree to-night, back from hunting. He'll settle the matter fairly. He's very, very clever."

So the two mice went out on to the window-sill, each carrying their bit of

bacon rind, and joined the rat. He took them to Blink the Owl.

Blink sat at the entrance of his hole, his great round eyes wide open. He blinked when he saw the two mice. The rat bowed to him and hurried to explain.

"Mr. Blink, here are two mice who are quarrelling about bacon rind. They want to share it, but each wants exactly the same share as the other. Will you please say if it is fairly divided?"

The owl looked down. The mice laid the bacon rind at his feathered feet. "Ah," said the owl, in a hooting kind of voice, "ah, I see one piece is longer than the other. I will put it right!"

He bit quite a large piece off the longer bit of rind. Then the rat placed the pieces both together, and the mice saw that now the

other piece was longer than the one the owl had bitten.

"Ah — not quite right yet," said the owl graciously. "I will take a bit off the other one."

To the dismay of the two watching mice the owl bit a really enormous piece off the other bit of rind. There was hardly any left of it!

"I say, Mr. Blink," began Twitchy anxiously. "I say, don't you think . . ."

Mr. Blink didn't let him finish what he was going to say. He opened and shut his big eyes slowly, and spoke in his loud voice.

"Hoo-hoo! This won't do at all! Why, I've bitten far too much off that piece. I'll make the other bit match at once!"

And, to the great despair of the two mice, he snapped with his hooked beak

at the other piece of rind—and this time he swallowed it completely !

" Look what you've done ! " said the rat, and he looked quite angry, for he had hoped to have at least half of the rind. " You've eaten it all except that tiddley little bit ! "

" You greedy bird ! You great big horrid hooting Mr. Blink ! " squeaked Twitchy, losing his temper. " Look what you've left us, just that little speck."

" Excuse *me*," said the rat at once, and he made a dart at it. " What about my payment for bringing you here to Mr. Owl ? "

" You may have that last little bit, Rat," said Mr. Blink. " That shall be your payment."

So the rat gobbled up the last bit, and the mice looked on angrily.

" Horrid, mean rat ! " said Twitchy.

" Nasty, greedy owl ! " said Woffly.

" Rat, do you like mice for your dinner ? " suddenly said Mr. Blink, and

"I hunt them every night."

he spread his great wings for a moment. "I hunt them every night. Bacon rind isn't much to eat, is it, for big fellows like us? What do you say to a meal of mice?"

The two mice squealed in fright and horror. In a trice they had disappeared. They went helter-skelter down a hole, and sat trembling at the end of it, their

noses twitching as they looked at one another.

"*What* an escape!" said Woffly.

"They nearly got us!" said Twitchy.

"We've lost all that bacon rind," said Woffly mournfully.

"Why did we quarrel so stupidly?" asked Twitchy. "There was plenty for us both."

"We'll go and get some more," said Woffly.

So back to the kitchen they went. But alas for them, Tinker, the big black cat, was there now and it was no place for mice!

"We'll be sensible next time," said poor Woffly, going to bed hungry.

"*If* there is a next time!" said poor Twitchy, and curled his tail round his nose as he always did when he went to sleep.

"Hoo-hoo-hoo!" said the owl in his tree. "I hope someone else will bring me a nice little tit-bit. I *did* enjoy that bit of bacon rind!"

SOME PUZZLING PROVERBS

HERE are some queer proverbs. As you will see, each one is really a mix-up of two. Can you sort them out and find what they really ought to be?

1. Two birds in the bush are better than no bread.
2. Great minds let sleeping dogs lie.
3. Too many cooks cast their shadows before.
4. Pride goes before a bird in the hand.
5. Look before you take a horse to water.
6. Birds of a feather make hay.
7. Half a loaf has a silver lining.
8. It's no good locking the stable door when the sun shines.

(*Answers on page* 159.)

A VERY GOOD IDEA!

MR. NIMBLE took off his big glasses and put them down beside him with a sigh.

"I've finished," he said. "See, doesn't the necklace look lovely?"

He held it up for his wife and three children to see. It certainly did look beautiful—and no wonder, because it belonged to the Queen herself! The necklace had broken and some of the lovely beads had been lost.

So she had sent it to Mr. Nimble, who was famous for making the most beautiful jewellery that could be bought in or out

of Fairyland. His long, nimble fingers could thread the very smallest beads.

"I hope the goblins who live underground near us haven't heard about our mending the Queen's necklace," said his wife. "I'm sure if they have they would try and get it from us as we take it to the palace."

Well, the goblins *had* heard about it, and they certainly meant to get it from Mr. Nimble when he set off to the palace with it. They had already made their plans.

Mr. Nimble didn't know that a small goblin peeped in at the window each evening to see if the necklace was mended yet. He didn't know that a little mouse listened to all he said and then ran off under the ground to tell the goblins. He didn't know that the goblins were preparing to lie in wait for him as he went on his way to the palace.

So he wasn't a bit worried. All the same, he and his wife thought it would be a

good idea to set off to the palace at night, when it was dark. The three children wanted to come too.

"Very well," said Mr. Nimble. "You shall come as well, and keep your eyes and ears open in case you hear any of those mischievous goblins."

So one dark night the whole family set out. But the little mouse had heard their plan, and had run to tell the goblins. They were all waiting in the woods for Mr. Nimble and his little family!

"Now, not a sound!" said the head goblin. "Not a word! You, Jinky, can tackle Mr. Nimble with me, and run off with the necklace as soon as you get it. You, Smudge, can pin Mrs. Nimble's hands behind her and tie a hanky over her mouth, because she can scream very loudly. And you three goblins can catch the children and spank them hard if they yell."

"Right," said the goblins, and their green eyes gleamed. What a lot of money

The little mouse had run to tell the goblins.

they would make when they sold the Queen's necklace! Witch Sharp-Eyes would buy it, they knew that.

Now, just as the Nimble family were setting foot in the wood, one of the sharp-eared children heard something. It was a sneeze!

A sneeze—in the wood! Someone must be hiding there. Perhaps it was the goblins. "I heard a sneeze," whispered the small boy, moving his long ears around like a rabbit. "Quick, we must go back home. The goblins are hiding in the wood!"

" The goblins are hiding in the wood ! "

" I can smell them," said another of the children, and she twitched her woffly nose like a mouse.

" We can't go back. The goblins are surrounding us. I can hear them," said Mr. Nimble, his pointed ears trembling as the little rustling sounds came to him. " Oh—what shall we do? We shall be robbed of the beautiful necklace."

" Father Nimble—*I* know what we'll do," suddenly said Mrs. Nimble. " There's a ditch near here, and nettles grow in it—fierce, stinging-nettles, with poison in the hairs on their leaves. Let's creep over to the ditch, and pick some of them. Then we'll hold them in front of

us, and what a shock the goblins will get when they feel the sting of the nettles ! "

" Yes. They don't know anything about plants," said one of the children. " They are underground folk. They won't be able to understand it. Let's hiss like snakes as we go, and when the goblins get stung by the nettles in the darkness, they will think snakes have harmed them ! "

The other children giggled. They thought this was great fun. None of them liked the goblins, who had often caught and spanked them for nothing at all.

" I know what we'll do," said Mrs. Nimble.

They crept to the ditch. They bent down low and crept beneath the nettles, for they were very, very small people. Mr. Nimble took out his knife and in a trice he had cut down five nettles. Then he ran his knife a little way up each stalk to clear away any hairs or leaves that might sting his little family.

"Here you are," he said. "There's one each. Now keep together in a close bunch, and spread out the nettles all round us. Ready?"

"Sssssss!" answered the children, pretending to be snakes already. They moved forward, keeping close together, hissing loudly.

The goblins were puzzled. What was that hissing noise they wondered. Ah, now they could hear the footsteps of the Nimble family. Good!

"Off we go!" cried the head goblins; and the little company swept down upon the Nimbles. But as soon as they reached them they touched the nettles.

Oooooh ! How they stung ! How they smarted ! What was it ? What could it be ? The Nimbles were there because the goblins could hear their footsteps—but who was with them, stinging like this ?

" Sssssssssssss ! " hissed the Nimbles, quite enjoying themselves.

" Snakes ! " cried the goblins. " It's snakes ! They've got snakes with them to protect them. We've been bitten by poisonous snakes ! Oh, oh ! We shall die of poison ! Quick, go for help ! "

The goblins fled away.

The goblins fled away, their faces, hands and legs burning and smarting with the nettle-stings. Big, white patches swelled up on them that hurt and stung.

"Good!" said Mr. Nimble. "They've gone. How they yelled. Those nettles must have been very good stingers."

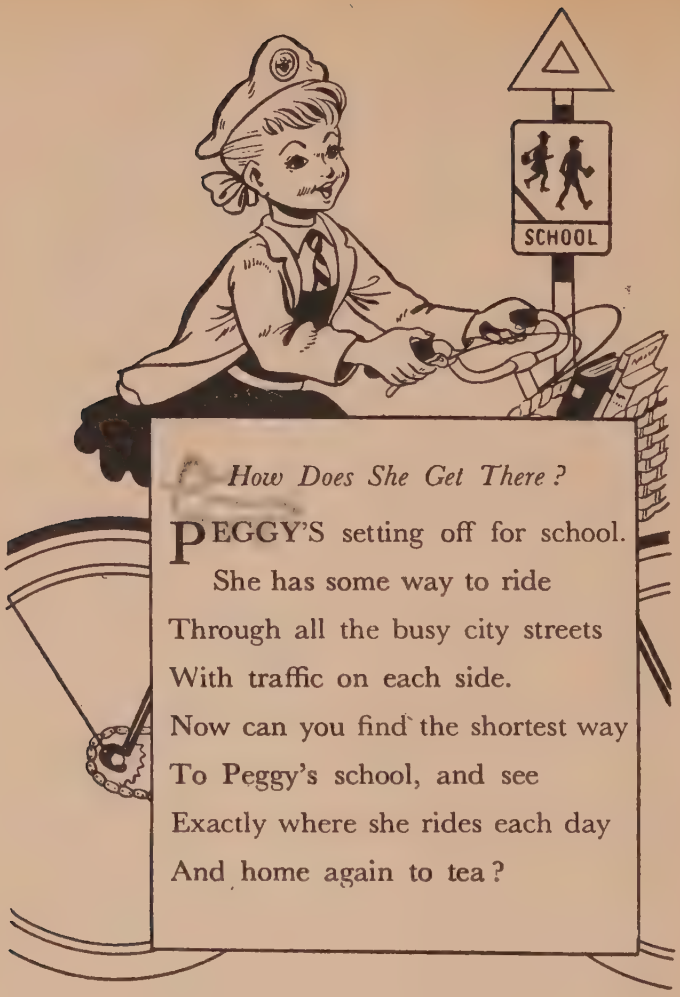
"They are," said one of the children. "One of them has given *me* a sting. I'll find a cool dock-leaf and wrap it round my hand. Then it will soon feel better. I expect the goblins have gone to a witch to be made better, and she will charge them a tremendous lot of money—but if they only knew it, a few dock-leaves would put them right."

They delivered the necklace safely at the palace, and the Queen was very pleased. Then they went back home again, knowing they wouldn't meet any more goblins that night!

"It was a very good idea of yours, wife," said Mr. Nimble. "A very good idea, indeed."

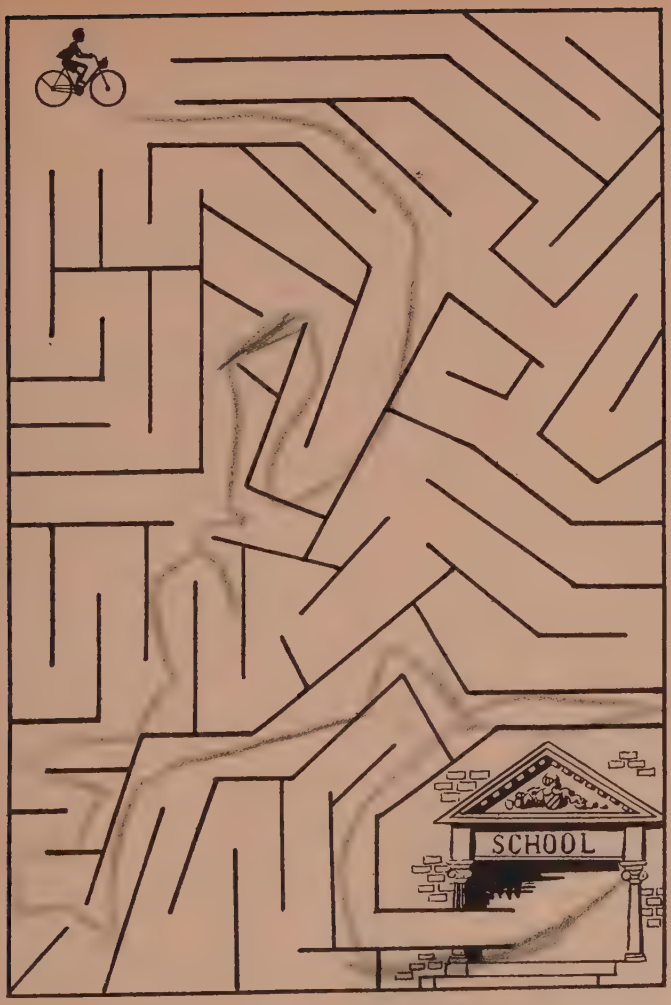
The Queen was very pleased.

So it was, wasn't it? And do you know what the Nimble children do now whenever they meet any of those mischievous goblins? They hiss-sss-sss-sss just like snakes. And you should see those goblins rush away!



How Does She Get There?

PEGGY'S setting off for school.
She has some way to ride
Through all the busy city streets
With traffic on each side.
Now can you find the shortest way
To Peggy's school, and see
Exactly where she rides each day
And home again to tea?


SCHOOL

A LAME DUCK AND A STILE

"I'M taking my doll for a walk, Mummy," said Amanda. "I've put her into her pram and tucked her up. We shall just go across the fields and back."

"You won't be able to take your pram over the stile," said Mummy, "so don't try."

"No, I won't," said Amanda. "I'll just walk as far as the stile, and then I'll turn back. That will be a nice walk for Rosebud."

Rosebud was her doll, a small, lovely little thing, lying in the pram with her eyes shut. She always shut them when she lay down. Mother said she wished

babies would do that too. It would be so nice if they all went to sleep as soon as they were put down in prams or cots !

Rosebud opened her eyes when she sat up. She had blue eyes and golden hair. Amanda loved her very much. She liked taking her for walks in the pram. She often talked to her as she went along.

She talked to her that morning, although Rosebud was asleep, with her eyes shut.

" It's a lovely sunny day," said Amanda. " The buttercups are out all over the field, Rosebud. They are brushing against the wheels of the pram and making them all yellow."

Rosebud said nothing. She kept her eyes shut.

" The birds are singing," said Amanda. " I can hear them. Sit up and listen, Rosebud. It would do you good to be awake now."

She sat Rosebud up. Rosebud opened her blue eyes and looked at Amanda. She was a very smiley doll, and her smile

showed two rows of tiny white teeth. Amanda sometimes tried to clean Rosebud's tiny teeth, but it wasn't easy.

"Now you can see the buttercups, and hear the birds singing," said Amanda. Then she stopped talking and looked puzzled.

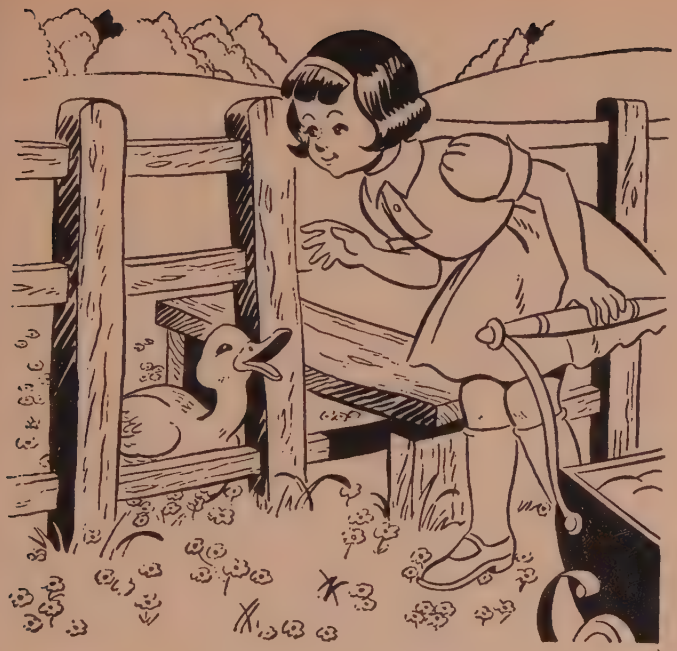
"What's that noise?" she said. "It sounds like a very loud quacking!"

It was. "QUACK, QUACK, QUACK!" went the noise. "QUACK, QUACK, QUACK!"

"There aren't any ducks near here, surely?" said Amanda. "They all swim on the pond at the farm. Rosebud, we had better find out if it is a duck."

They went on down the path across the buttercup field. The noise grew louder. Amanda came to the stile and stopped.

The quacking seemed to come from the other side. She peeped over the stile. She was surprised to see a large white duck there, looking up at her out of bright eyes.



" QUACK ! " said the duck.

" Hallo ! " said Amanda, rather startled. " What are you quacking for ? "

" QUACK! " said the duck, and put its head through an opening under the stile.

" I see. You want to get over that stile," said Amanda. " Well, why don't you ! "

" Quack, quack," said the duck, in a sad sort of voice.

Then Amanda saw that it had a bad foot. It had webbed skin between its toes to help it when it swam—but the webbing on one foot was torn. It had caught its foot in some barbed wire and hurt it. Now it was lame and could hardly get along on its one good foot.

"Poor thing! You can't get over the stile!" said Amanda, in pity. "I'll help you over. Mummy is always saying something about helping lame ducks over a stile, but I never thought *I* should do that! I thought it was just a saying that meant helping people in trouble."

But this time it was real. There was a real lame duck, trying to get over a real stile, and Amanda was there to help it.

She climbed over the stile, and tried to push the duck through, over the bottom bar. It was difficult because the duck didn't seem to think that Amanda was trying to help it. It gave her a peck.

"Oh, don't do that when I'm trying

It gave her a peck.

to help you!" said Amanda. "That's not kind. Now—one more push—and over you go, poor lame duck!"

This time the duck did go over the stile and, much to its surprise, found itself on the other side. This was where it wanted to be.

It had swum out of the pond and down the stream. Then it had caught its foot in some barbed wire, and climbed on to the bank because its foot hurt it too much to

swim. It thought it would go home by the fields. But it hadn't been able to get over the stile.

Now it was over. It looked up at Amanda and said "Quack!" She thought perhaps it meant "Thank you." It began to waddle slowly along the path, which led to the farm where its pond was. But it

It sank down among the buttercups.

couldn't even waddle properly now. Its foot hurt it too much.

It sank down among the buttercups and gave a most doleful quack. Amanda looked at it in alarm.

"Can't you walk? You ought to get back to the farm and have your leg seen to. Try again."

The duck tried again, but once more it fell over. Amanda couldn't bear it. She wondered what to do.

"I know!" she said. "I'll wheel you in my pram. I once read a story about a little girl who wheeled a lost lamb home in her pram. So I don't see why I shouldn't wheel a lame duck."

She bent down to pick up the big, heavy duck. It pecked her hands.

"Don't!" said Amanda. "I'm only trying to help you! I can't leave you here. The fox might get you! He lives about these fields."

She bent down again, and again the duck pecked her and made a nasty sound

in its throat. Amanda didn't know what to do. What an ungrateful duck !

She had one last try. She picked up the big duck and popped it into her pram ! It pecked her again and tried to strike her with its wing. Amanda felt rather hurt.

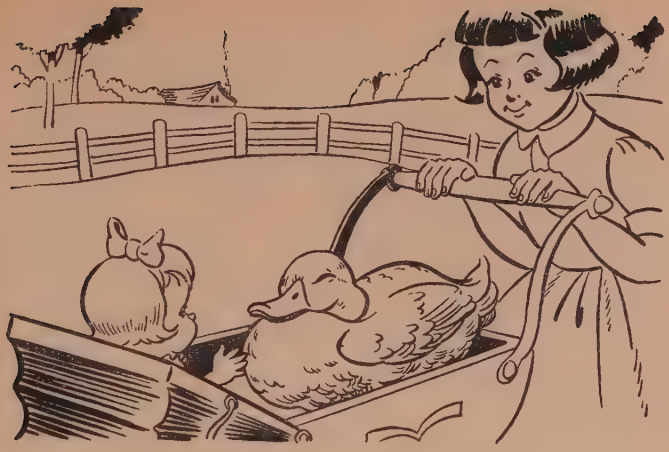
" You're unkind," she said. " Oh, do keep still ! You're sitting on poor Rosebud ! "

The duck wriggled about in the pram, and then it pecked Rosebud's nose ! Amanda was really cross.

" Now look here, Duck, I've done a lot for you, and I'm taking you home in Rosebud's pram. You've quacked at me and pecked me, and hit me with your wings—but you're *not* going to peck Rosebud ! Sit still ! "

After that the duck did sit still. It squatted comfortably down in the pram, leaving Rosebud just enough room, and quacked no more. It closed its eyes.

" Perhaps it likes being in the pram," thought Amanda, and wheeled it carefully



It closed its eyes.

along the path. She came to the farm and called to the farmer's wife.

" I've got one of your ducks in my pram. It has hurt its foot."

" Bless us all ! Fancy wheeling it back here, you kind little thing ! " cried Mrs. Straw, and hurried to get the duck. It gave Amanda one last peck.

" It doesn't like me," said Amanda, almost in tears. " I only tried to help it. It keeps pecking me."

" Only because it is in pain, dear," said

Mrs. Straw, and took the duck away to see to its foot. "Thank you for bringing it home."

Amanda went home with Rosebud to tell her mother about the duck. "It wasn't a nice duck," she said. "It didn't like me, even when I tried to help it. It never even quacked a thank-you."

Amanda was sad. She went to her pram to take Rosebud out—and then she got a surprise!

In the pram lay a big greenish-grey duck's egg! Amanda stared at it in the greatest astonishment. She picked it up and ran to her mother.

In the pram lay a big greenish-grey duck's egg!

"Mummy! The duck's laid me an egg! It must have liked me after all! Look!"

"What a beauty!" said Mummy. "That's the best reward the duck could give you, isn't it? You can have it for your breakfast."

"But I don't like ducks' eggs," said Amanda. "I had one at Auntie's once and it tasted funny. I don't want to eat it, Mummy . . ."

"Well—shall we give it to Henny-Penny to sit on?" said Mummy. "She has ten of her own eggs to sit on, and she won't mind if we add this duck's egg to her batch. Then maybe you will have a little duckling of your own!"

Amanda thought that was a fine idea. She put the warm duck's egg with Henny-Penny's big batch of brown eggs. Henny-Penny, the brown hen, didn't seem to mind a bit.

And do you know, out of that greenish-grey duck's egg came the dearest little

yellow duckling you ever saw! Henny-Penny sat on her eggs for some weeks, and ten of them hatched into yellow chicks—and one into the duckling!

"It's *my* duckling!" cried Amanda, in delight. "My very own. You shall be my pet, little duckling. I shall call you Quack!"

I saw Quack yesterday, and Amanda told me this story. She thought you might like to hear it too. Isn't he a dear little duckling, and isn't Amanda lucky to have him?

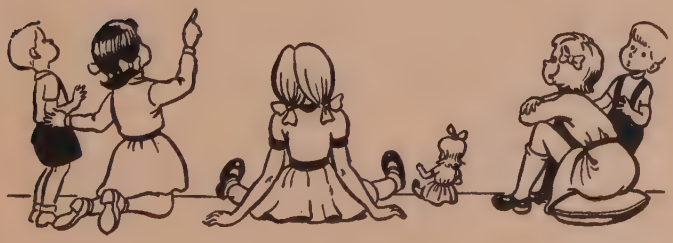
"I helped a lame duck over a stile!" she said, "and that's how I got a duckling for my own. I *am* a lucky little girl, aren't I?"

IS YOUR NAME HERE?

IN each of these sentences there is hidden a child's name. Perhaps yours is here too. See if you can find them all.

1. Their enemy was quite defeated.
2. Unusual ice-creams are difficult to get.
3. If ever I can help you, depend on me.
4. He did not like lean or fat meat.
5. How can Bob eat rice pudding?
6. The fox's den is well below the ground.
7. Health, O Master, is more than Wealth.
8. It's half red and half blue.
9. I have rather a bad cold.
10. He carved a beautiful cow in stone one day.

(*Answers on page* 47.)



MOTHER HUBBARD'S HONEY

MOTHER HUBBARD kept bees, and they made lovely golden honey for her. Mother Hubbard took it from the hives, and put it into jars.

Then, for once in a way, her cupboard was full when she went to it, instead of bare. Rows upon rows of honey jars stood there, waiting to be sold.

Now little Pixie Peep-About lived next door to Mother Hubbard, and he loved honey. But he wasn't a very good or very helpful pixie, so Mother Hubbard didn't give him any honey. She sold most of it, gave some to her friends, and kept six pots for herself.

Pixie Peep-About was cross because she never gave him any honey. "And I live next door, too!" he said to himself. "She might give me just a taste. She knows I love honey."

But Peep-About never gave Mother Hubbard any of his gooseberries when they were ripe. And he didn't offer her an egg when his hens laid him plenty. So it wasn't surprising that he didn't get any honey.

One summer he watched Mother Hubbard's bees. "How busy they are!" he said, as he peeped over the wall. "In and out, in and out of those hives all the day long. And what is more, a lot of those

He peeped over the wall.

bees come into *my* garden and take the honey from *my* flowers ! "

It was quite true. They did. But bees go anywhere and everywhere, so, of course, they went into Peep-About's garden, too.

" Some of that honey they are storing in Mother Hubbard's hives is mine, taken from my flowers," thought Peep-About. " So Mother Hubbard ought to give me plenty ! "

He told Mother Hubbard this, but she laughed. " Honey is free in the flowers! " she said. " Don't be silly, Peep-About."

Now, one day Mother Hubbard went to take the honeycombs from their hives. They were beautiful combs, full of golden honey. She meant to separate the honey from the comb, and store it in her jars. Peep-About knew she was going to do that. She did it every year.

" Now she'll have jars upon jars of honey, and she won't give me a single one," thought the pixie. " It's too bad. I haven't tasted honey for months, and I

She handed one to old Mister Potter.

should love some on a bit of bread and butter."

Mother Hubbard poured the honey into her jars. She handed one to old Mister Potter, at the bottom of the garden. He was a kind old fellow, and always gave Mother Hubbard tomatoes when he had some to spare. He was delighted.

"Look at that now!" said Peep-About

to himself. "Not a drop for me! Mean old thing! My, what delicious honey it looked!"

The next day Mother Hubbard dressed herself up in her best, and set out to catch the bus, with three pots of honey in her basket. Peep-About met her as she went to the bus.

"Where are you going?" asked Peep-About.

"To see my sister, Dame Blue-Bonnet," said Mother Hubbard. "I'll be gone all day, so if you see the milkman, Peep-About, tell him to leave me a pint of milk."

"Gone all day!" thought Peep-About.

"Where are you going?"

" Well, what about me getting in at the kitchen window, going to that cupboard, and helping myself to a few spoonfuls of honey ! "

So, when Mother Hubbard had safely got on the bus, Peep-About crept in at her kitchen window and went to the cupboard. It wasn't locked. He opened it, and saw row upon row of jars of honey. Oh, what a lovely sight !

He was small and the cupboard was high. He tried to scramble up to one of the shelves, and he upset a jar of honey. Down it went, and poured all over him !

" Gracious! " said Peep-About in alarm. " It's all over me ! How lovely it tastes ! "

He thought he had better go into his own home, scrape the honey off himself, and eat it that way. So out of the window he went.

But the garden was full of Mother Hubbard's bees, and they smelt the honey on Peep-About at once.

" Zzzzzzz ! Honey ! ZZZZZZZZ !

Honey!" they buzzed to one another, and flew round Peep-About. They tried to settle on the honey that was running down his head and neck.

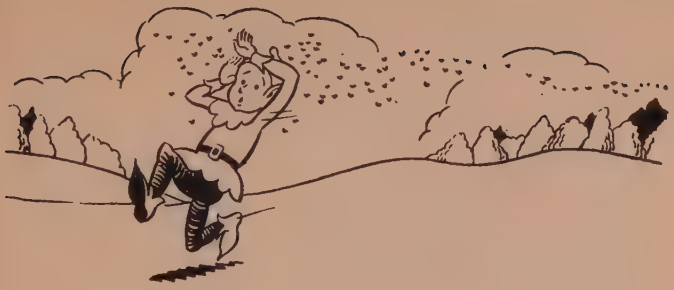
"Go away! Go away! Stop buzzing round me!" he cried. But no matter how he beat them away, they came back again.

And now Peep-About had a terrible time, for wherever he went the bees went too. They followed him into his kitchen. They stung him when he flapped them away. They followed him out into the garden again. They followed him into the street. They wouldn't leave Peep-About alone for one minute.

He couldn't sit down and have his dinner. He had to go without his tea. He ran here and he ran there, but always the bees flew with him.

He had their honey on him, and they wanted it.

More and more bees came to join in the fun. At last Peep-About saw Mother



Always the bees flew with him.

Hubbard walking up her front path and he ran to her. She was astonished to see her bees round him in a big buzzing cloud.

"Take them away! Make them go to their hive!" wept Peep-About.

Mother Hubbard touched him and found he was sticky with honey. Then she knew what had happened.

"You went to steal some of my honey," she said sternly. "You're a bad pixie. You can keep the honey—and the bees too! I shan't call them off!"

So, until the bees went to bed in their hive that night, poor Peep-About had to

put up with them. He ran for miles trying to get rid of them, but he couldn't. They could fly faster than he could run!

At last the bees went to bed. Peep-About stripped off his sticky suit and washed it. He got himself a meal. He cried all the time. "I shall never like honey again," he wept. "Never, never, never!"

Mother Hubbard was sorry the next day that she hadn't helped poor Peep-About, even though he had been a bad little pixie. So she sent him in a tiny jar of honey all for himself!

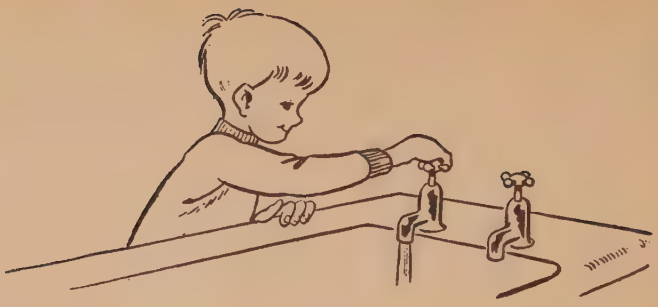
But wasn't it a pity—he couldn't eat it! He didn't like honey any more. He couldn't bear to look at it.

"It serves me right!" he said. "When I couldn't have it, I loved it, and tried to take it. Now, here I've got a jar and I can't bear to eat it. It's a good punishment for me, it really is!"

He was right. It was!

Tell-Tale Foot-Prints

ONE of you toys was out last night,
And it's no good shaking your heads!
Whoever it was had a fine old game
All over the garden beds.
Your foot-prints are there, as clear as can be,
You played in the mud and the rain,
And you didn't remember to wipe your feet
When you came in the playroom again.
Look at the marks, all over the floor,
Not one of you seems to care!
Oh Teddy, you're blushing—it must be you.
You're really a BAD little bear!



DRIP! DRIP! DRIP!

DANNY wanted a tricycle. "Please, please, do buy me one for my birthday!" he begged his mother. "I do so badly want one."

"Well—if you try to be a good and obedient boy till your birthday I will save up my money and buy you one," said Mummy. "But they cost a lot of money, you know, Danny."

"I do want one. John's got a blue one and Fanny's got a red one, and George has got a black one, and they've all got bells to ring," said Danny. "I simply must have one, Mummy."

"You try to be a good boy and Daddy and I will get you one," said Mummy again.

Danny wasn't really a very good boy. He didn't always do as he was told. He didn't put on his goloshes when he was told to. He didn't always wipe his feet. He forgot to clean his teeth, and he often came to meals with hands so black that Mummy had to send him away to wash them.

There were two things that Mummy was really very strict about. One was that Danny was never to use matches and the other was that he was never to turn taps on.

And Danny never had done these things. He was afraid of matches, and he was a bit afraid of turning on a tap in case he wouldn't be able to turn it off again.

Now, one day his uncle gave him a toy steamer. If you wound it up it would chug through the water. Danny liked it very much.

"Can I sail it on the pond in the park?" said Danny.

"No," said Mummy. "It's too wet to-day. Wait till to-night and you can have it in your bath."

"But I want to wind it up *now* and see it sailing on the water," said Danny.

"Well, you can't," said Mummy. "I have to go out this morning, and I'm certainly not going to fill the bath for you."

So she went out and Danny heard the door bang. He looked at his new steamer. He longed to see how it went in the water.

"I can't wait till to-night!" thought Danny. "I really can't. Shall I go up to the bathroom, and put just a little water in the bath? I am sure I can turn the tap off there when I have enough water. I do so want to see my steamer in the bath."

Well, he went upstairs. He went into the bathroom, walking rather quietly so that Mary the maid should not hear where he was. He shut the door.

It went beautifully !

Then he turned on the cold tap It was rather hard to turn, but soon the water was pouring out into the bath. When it was about a quarter full Danny thought he had better turn off the tap.

" But it would be such fun to see the bath *quite* full—and I wouldn't have to bend over so far to put my steamer in," he thought. " It won't matter if I fill it, because I can empty it long before Mummy comes back. She won't know. I will be careful not to make a mess."

So he didn't turn off the tap. He let it go on running, and soon there was a lot of water in the bath! Danny wound up his steamer and put it in the water.

It went beautifully! You should have seen it chugging along the bath. Danny turned it whenever it came to the end of the bath, and back it went again, looking as real as could be.

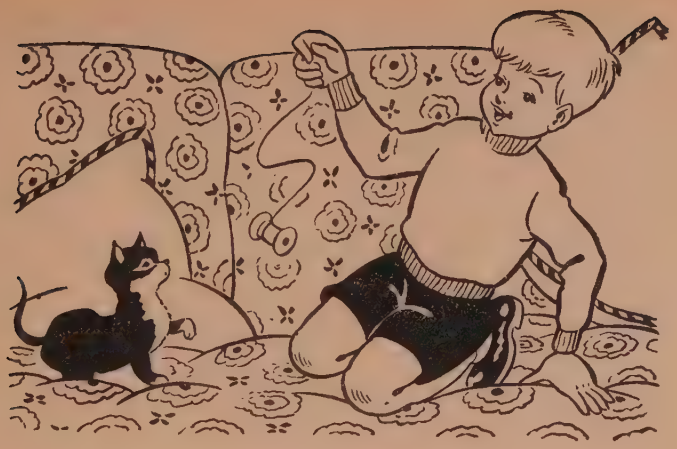
Suddenly Danny heard someone calling him.

"Danny! Danny! Where are you? I've got a jam tart for you. Come along!"

Danny left his steamer in the bath, meaning to bring his jam tart back to the bathroom to eat. He forgot to turn off the tap. Downstairs he went at top speed, for he loved jam tarts.

Mary was in the kitchen, and with her was her sister, who had just come to call.

"Look what my sister's got!" said Mary, giving Danny a tart. "She's got a kitten she's taking home to her little girl."



Danny loved kittens.

Danny loved kittens. He played with this one in delight, and forgot all about his steamer. Then he heard his mother coming home and he ran to her with the kitten.

"Look, Mummy, look! Mary's sister has brought a kitten. She's taking it home to her little girl. Isn't it lovely?"

Mummy loved kittens too, and they played with it in the sitting-room for a long time. Then Mummy looked a little puzzled.

"I keep thinking I hear something," she said. "It's funny—a tapping, dripping noise. Can you hear it, Danny?"

Yes, Danny heard it, too. He couldn't think what it was. They both listened and then they played with the kitten again.

Suddenly they heard Mary give a scream. "Oh, madam! Come quickly! There's water flooding down the stairs! Oh, do come!"

Mummy rushed into the hall. There was a louder sound of dripping there—and a sound of swishing and gurgling too, for down the stairs came a flood of water, right into the hall.

Then Mummy saw that the ceiling overhead was dripping and damp! And, as she looked up, part of it fell away and almost hit her!

"What's happening?" cried Mummy. "Good gracious, has the cistern burst?"

She picked her way upstairs, getting her shoes very wet. Danny followed her, an

awful thought suddenly coming into his mind. He hadn't turned the tap off!

Mummy waded along the passage to the bathroom. The water was coming from there. She looked round the door.

"Oh! The bath is full and overflowing! The tap is running! Oh, who has done this?"

She turned the tap off, and looked round in dismay, for everything was running with water. The bath-mat was soaked. In the bath Danny's steamer still swam.

Danny burst into tears. It was a terrible

She looked round the door.

sight to see so much water everywhere.

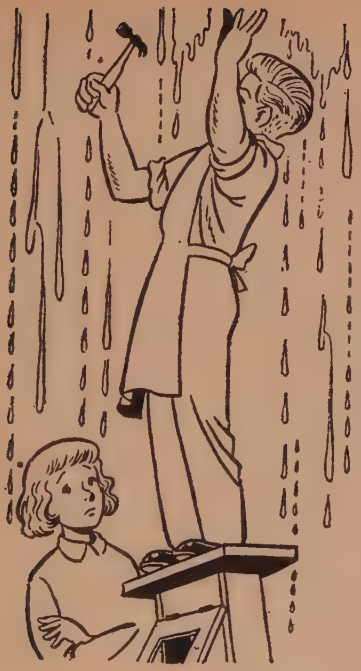
"Mummy, I turned the tap on to fill the bath; I forgot to turn it off when I sailed my steamer. Oh, Mummy!"

Mummy didn't say a word. She called Mary, and the two of them tried to clear up the mess. But Mummy had to send for a man to mend the hall ceiling.

Drip, drip, drip! All that day water dripped downwards, and Danny heard it. What would Daddy say when he got home?

Daddy didn't say very much, but what he had to say was not pleasant.

"When you are disobedient and



suffer for it yourself it is not so bad. But when you make other people suffer for it, it is very bad. This will cost me three pounds. How much have you got in your money-box ? I don't see why you shouldn't pay for all this mess to be cleared up. It will teach you not to be disobedient another time."

"I've only got three shillings," said Danny, trying not to cry.

"I've got some saved up," said Mummy. "I was saving up to buy Danny a tricycle, you know, Daddy. We said we might give him one for his birthday."

"Well, we shall have to use that money, I'm afraid," said Daddy. "How much have we got saved up for the tricycle, do you think?"

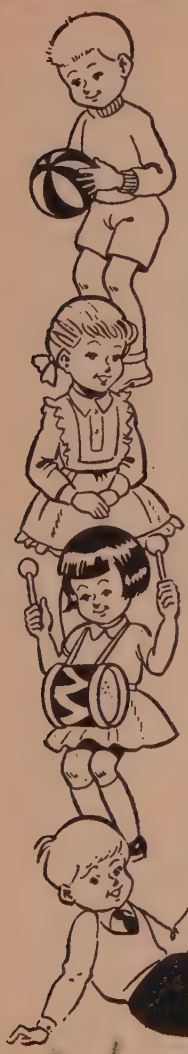
"Two pounds and seventeen shillings," said Mummy, when she had counted.

"Well, with Danny's three shillings that will make exactly the three pounds we want," said Daddy. "I'm sorry, Danny, but I'm afraid you won't be able to have a tricycle now. The money will have to be spent on putting right the things that went wrong through your stupid disobedience. You have always been forbidden to turn on the taps."

"I know," said poor Danny. "I'll have to wait till my birthday next year for a tricycle. But I'll get it then—you'll see! I won't do a thing like this again, Daddy!"

I hope he gets his tricycle, don't you? He has never forgotten the awful sound of drip, drip, drip, when he forgot to turn off the bathroom tap. It must have been a horrid sound to hear!

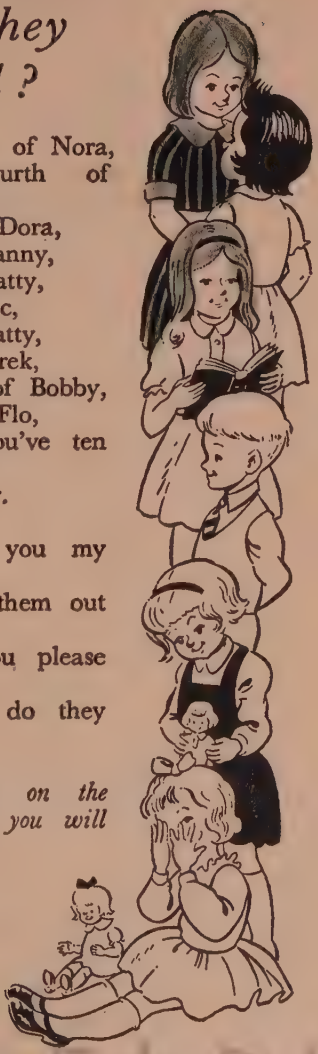
What Name Do They Spell?



THE first of Nora,
The fourth of Annie,
The second of Dora,
The third of Fanny,
The fifth of Matty,
The first of Eric,
The third of Patty,
The first of Derek,
The fourth of Bobby,
The second of Flo,
And now you've ten letters
To set in a row.

They'll tell you my name
If you sort them out well.
Now can you please tell me
What name do they spell?

(*If you look on the book's jacket, you will see the answer!*)



WHO TOLD YOU THAT?

WHEN Granpa Puff went to stay with Patty Simple, she made him very welcome. She gave him the best bed in the house, and she baked him the biscuits he liked the most.

Then she asked him a question. "Granpa Puff—you haven't brought that horrid pipe with you, have you?"

"I have, Patty, I have," said Granpa Puff, looking rather cross. "And why shouldn't I?"

"Well, Granpa, you know how that thick pipe-smoke of yours makes me cough," said Patty. "I do beg of you not to smoke in the house. Smoke in the garden if you want to."

"Very well, Patty. I will not smoke in the house if you don't like it," said Granpa Puff.

Now that evening Granpa Puff was in his bedroom, reading, and he felt that he badly wanted a smoke. He looked out of the window. It looked as if it was going to rain. He didn't want to go and smoke in the garden, because if it rained he would get wet. But he had promised Patty not to smoke in the house. So what was he to do?

"I know!" thought Granpa Puff. "I'll light my pipe, sit by the window, open it a crack, and let my pipe stick out of the window. Then I can puff all I like,

because the smoke won't go into the house. It will go into the open air."

So that is what Granpa Puff did. He sat at the window and puffed all his smoke out there. It went out in a big black cloud—puff, puff, puff.

Now Dame Twitter happened to come down the road just then and she saw the smoke coming from the window. She wondered whatever it could be, but it wasn't until she had gone right past and reached the corner that the thought of a fire came into her mind.

"My gracious!" she said, stopping. "Maybe Patty's house is on fire. That was smoke coming from the window!"

Mr. Tall-Hat was passing and he stared in surprise. "Patty Simple's house on fire, did you say?" he said. "What a dreadful thing! Why, we'd better do something about it!"

"The smoke was coming from the bedroom window," said Dame Twitter. "Oh, my, oh, my—suppose there is someone

upstairs that has to be rescued! Patty Simple hasn't a long ladder. I know she hasn't."

"But *I* have!" said Mr. Tall-Hat, hurrying into his front gate. "*I* have. I'll fetch it and do any rescuing quite easily."

He soon came out with the long ladder. Topple, the brownie, who was passing,

Topple was almost knocked over by it.

looked at him in astonishment, and was almost knocked over by it.

"What's that for?" he asked.

"Haven't you heard?" said Mr. Tall-Hat. "Patty Simple's house is on fire. There's smoke pouring from a bedroom window. Patty hasn't a long ladder, so I'm taking mine to rescue her from upstairs."

"What about putting the fire out, as well as rescuing Patty," said Topple. "The house will be burnt down if we don't put the fire out. Has Patty got a hose-pipe?"

"No, she hasn't," said Dame Twitter. "I know she hasn't, because last summer she borrowed my hose to water her garden. Dear, dear, I'd better get it."

"No, don't you bother," said Topple. "I've got a hose I can bring. You run home and get some soup warmed up, Dame Twitter. Poor Patty is sure to be in a dreadful state when she is rescued."

Dame Twitter rushed off to get the soup.

" What's my fire engine for, I should like to know ? "

On the way she met Helmet, the fireman, and she shouted to him.

" Oh, Helmet, did you know Patty Simple's house is on fire ? Topple has gone to get his hose, and Mr. Tall-Hat is taking a ladder to rescue Patty, and I'm rushing off to warm up some soup."

" Why wasn't I told about this ? " said Helmet, looking cross. " What's my fire

" Woof ! " said Granpa Puff, and fell over backwards.

engine for, I should like to know ? There it is, sitting in the fire station doing nothing. Isn't it for fires ? "

" Dear, dear, I never thought of your fire engine," said Dame Twitter. " You go and get it, there's a dear, Helmet. Maybe you can do some good with it, too."

Now, all this time Granpa Puff was sitting by the bedroom window enjoying his smoke. He puffed great clouds of smoke out, and hoped that Patty wouldn't know. Patty was downstairs making a pudding for supper.

Suddenly Topple rushed up with a

long hose-pipe. He fastened one end to Patty's garden tap and turned on the water. He lifted the hose-pipe to the bedroom window, and a strong jet of water gushed out all over poor Granpa Puff.

"Woof!" said Granpa Puff, and fell over backwards. The water poured over him and made enormous puddles on the floor.

"Help! Help!" yelled Granpa Puff, scared out of his life. "Help, I say! Help!"

Just then Mr. Tall-Hat rushed up with his long ladder. He heard the cries for

He lifted the hose-pipe to the bedroom window.

Mr. Tall-Hat was very cross.

help and put his ladder against the bedroom window. Up he went at once and leapt in at the window, feeling terribly brave. He jumped on top of poor Granpa Puff, and made him yell again.

He tried to pick Granpa Puff up from the ground, but the old man was now very angry. He began to struggle for all he was worth. Then in came Patty Simple, scared at all the noise.

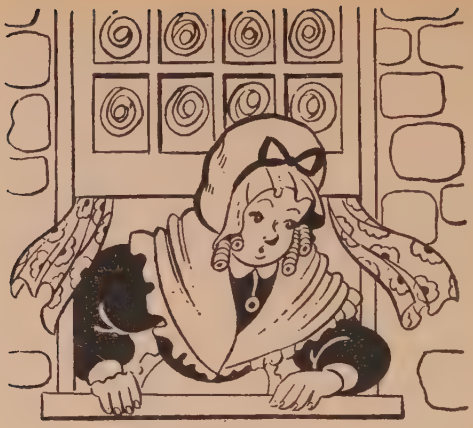
"Patty! Make this fellow leave go of

my arm!" yelled Granpa Puff. "Look, first he soaked me with water, then he tries to kidnap me!"

"Oh, you bad man, Mr. Tall-Hat!" cried Patty; and she smacked Mr. Tall-Hat hard on the face. He was very cross.

"Is that the way to treat somebody who bravely comes to the rescue!" he shouted. Patty gaped at him in astonishment. And then, with a tremendous noise, up drove the fire engine, clanging its fire bell loudly.

"Fire! Fire!" cried everyone,



Patty leaned out of the window.

"Fire! Fire!" cried everyone, rushing out of their front doors. Helmet, the fireman, unrolled his big hose-pipe and swung his ladders off the fire engine. Then he looked for the fire.

"Where is it?" he said. But nobody knew. Patty leaned out of the window.

"What's all this?" she shouted. "Why have you brought the fire engine, Helmet? And who soaked Granpa and his bedroom? And, please, will someone come and get Mr. Tall-Hat, because he came up to Granpa Puff's bedroom and went mad."

"Your house was on fire, Patty," said Helmet. "Did you know?"

"Of course not," said Patty. "On fire, indeed! Who told you that?"

Then along came Dame Twitter, carrying a big jug of warm soup. She saw Patty at the bedroom window and called to her. "Here you are, Patty, my dear! I'm so sorry about the fire. You come down and have some nice warm soup to make you feel better."

"Has everyone gone mad?" said Patty, and she banged the window shut. She ran downstairs, and tried to find out how it was that everyone seemed to think her house was on fire. "Who told you that?" she kept asking. "Who told you that?"

"I passed your house and saw clouds of smoke coming from the window, really I did," said Dame Twitter. "I am not making this up, Patty. It's true."

"Hmmmmm," said Granpa Puff, and turned very red. Patty looked at him.

"Were you smoking your pipe, Granpa Puff?" she said sternly.

"Well, out of the window, my dear, not in the house," said poor Granpa Puff, squeezing some water from his coat. "Just out of the window."

"Oh, the bad man!" said Dame Twitter. "He made us all think the house was on fire!"

"He made *you* think so, Dame Twitter, but it was *you* who told everyone else, instead of coming knocking at my door to ask me what was happening," said Patty Simple. "Granpa Puff, I'm ashamed of you. See what you have done!"

"Well, well," said Mr. Tall-Hat, sitting down at the kitchen table. "Don't let's waste Dame Twitter's very nice soup. Let's all have some. We'll soon feel better."

So they had the soup, and they did feel better. Very soon they were laughing about the whole thing, and when they

went home Helmet let Dame Twitter, Topple and Mr. Tall-Hat ride on his fire engine. So they were very pleased.

But Patty Simple took Granpa Puff's pipe away from him. "I'm not going to have the fire engine out every time you want to smoke!" she said. "What a thing to happen!"

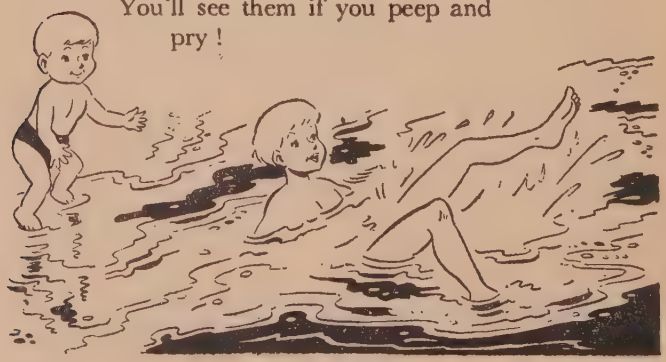
So Granpa Puff only smokes in the garden now. People passing by think there must be a bonfire there, but there isn't, it's only Granpa Puff smoking his pipe.

Hidden Sea-Creatures

THE sea was rough, the waves were high,
The clouds went racing through the sky,
And every creature in the sea
Was just as frightened as can be.

Can you see them hidden there?
A mermaid with her seaweed hair,
A crab inside his armoured shell,
A lobster and some shrimps as well.

An octopus with arms and head.
A starfish with his fingers spread.
They're hidden there for you to spy.
You'll see them if you peep and pry!



MOTHER HAS A BIRTHDAY

"DO you know, Belinda," said Billy-Bob, "it's Mother's birthday soon. What shall we give her?"

"We gave her a brooch with 'Mother' on last year," said Belinda, "and she liked that very much. Whatever can we give her this time?"

"Let's think," said Billy-Bob. So they thought hard. Belinda thought with her eyes shut, but at last she opened them and looked at Billy-Bob.

"I know!" she said. "Let's give Mother a new arm-chair for herself. She says hers isn't very comfortable."

"Oh, Belinda, you don't know how much things cost," said Billy-Bob. "An arm-chair would be a big present even for Daddy to give Mother."

"Well, let's give her a clock for her bedroom," said Belinda.

"You always think of expensive things," said Billy-Bob. "We couldn't afford that."

"Well, what *can* we buy then," said Belinda. "*You* say something."

"We'll see how much money we've got in our money-boxes," said Billy-Bob. So they emptied them out, and counted up all the pennies, and the two six-

pences that Aunt Susan had given them on her last visit.

"I've got one shilling and fivepence altogether and you've got one shilling and twopence," said Billy-Bob. "That's—let me see—yes, that's two shillings and sevenpence. If we saved fivepence more we could buy that pretty mug in the china shop with 'Mother' on it. Then Mother could use it every morning and evening when she cleans her teeth!"

"Oh, she'd like that," said Belinda, pleased. "She really would. My mug has 'Belinda' on it, and yours has 'Billy-Bob.' It would be nice for Mother to have one too."

"Wuff!" said Wags, licking Belinda's hand and looking up at her with large, soft, brown eyes. Belinda gave a squeak.

"Oh! Wags wants a mug, too, with *his* name on, Billy-Bob! Do you think we could get him one?"

"Now have you ever seen Wags clean

his teeth, Belinda?" said Billy-Bob. "He doesn't want one. Don't be silly."

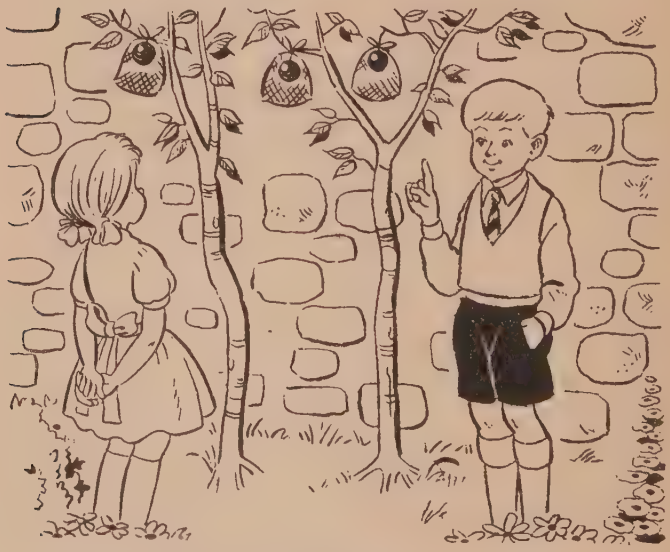
"Well, he said he did," said Belinda, who was always quite sure that she understood all Wags' barks and wuffs.

It was decided that Mother should have the pretty mug for her birthday, and she really couldn't think what the secret could

The mug was still there.

be that Billy-Bob and Belinda kept talking about. She said it made her feel excited. The children often looked in the china shop to make quite sure that the mug was still there, and it was.

There was another excitement just then too. Billy-Bob and Belinda each had a little plum tree in their garden—and for the first time that year there were plums on it! Billy-Bob's had two and Belinda's



Mother had made little muslin bags for the last three plums.

" My rose tree has three beautiful buds."

had one—but that one was very large and juicy. There had been more plums on the trees at first, but they had fallen off, or been eaten by ants. Mother had made little muslin bags for the last three plums and had slipped them over the fruit to keep them safe.

" They are growing bigger and bigger in the bags," said Belinda each morning. " Soon they will be big enough to pick. Then what a feast we shall have ! "

"My rose tree has three beautiful buds on it," said Billy-Bob, looking at it closely. "Has yours any, Belinda?"

"It has four!" said Belinda, counting. "I shall be very grand and have them on my dressing-table like Mother, in my own little vase. I shall be able to smell them all night long then."

"I shall leave mine on the rose tree," said Billy-Bob. "They look so lovely there. They shall grow there till all the petals fall—then I'll give them to the tortoise. He'll love to eat them for his dinner. So my roses will be beautiful *and* useful too."

Billy-Bob and Belinda put some more pennies into their money-boxes before Mother's birthday, and soon they had three shillings and a penny between them. But then a dreadful thing happened.

Billy-Bob and Belinda went to play with their ball and cricket bat in the garden. For a little while they played well—and then they began to be silly.

Billy-Bob swiped the ball so hard that it flew into the garden next door, and with many giggles the children squeezed through the hedge to get it again.

Miss Hall lived next door. Sometimes she was in a good temper and sometimes she was in a bad one. To-day she was not to be seen, so Billy-Bob and Belinda

Crash ! The window broke in half.

got their ball easily. Then they went back to their game—and this time Belinda was silly. She hit the ball so wildly that it flew straight over the hedge again and hit the big window of the garden shed next door.

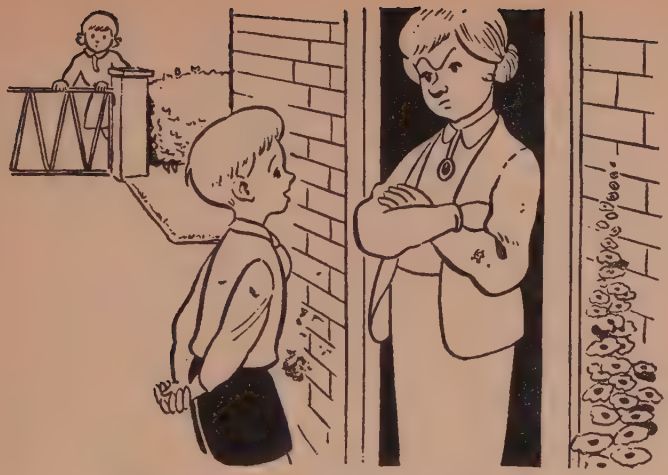
Crash! The window broke in half, and bits of glass slithered down to the ground. Belinda and Billy-Bob went quite pale. Whatever were they to do?

Nobody came to see about the crash. Nobody had heard it. "Let's run indoors," said Belinda.

How Billy-Bob wanted to! But he knew he mustn't do anything like that. "I've got to go and own up," he said in a shaky voice. "You needn't come, Belinda. But I must go and do it quickly before I feel too frightened."

Belinda began to cry. She took Billy-Bob's hand. "But *I* broke the window," she said. "I ought to go, not you. But I daren't, Billy-Bob."

"I'm the oldest," said Billy-Bob. "I shouldn't have let us be silly like that.



" We've broken your shed window with our ball."

Mother has always told us not to be silly with balls when there is glass near. Good-bye, Belinda. I'm going to own up."

Belinda really didn't dare to go with Billy-Bob. She only went as far as the front gate next door. Billy-Bob went right up to the door and knocked. Miss Hall came to the door herself.

" Please, Miss Hall," said Billy-Bob, still in a very shaky voice. " We've broken your shed window with our ball. I'm very sorry."

Miss Hall was in a bad temper. She glared at Billy-Bob. "You tiresome children!" she said. "Now you'll just have to pay for that. It cost three shillings to put that window in—and three shillings you'll have to pay."

"Yes, Miss Hall," said Billy-Bob. "I'll go and get the money now."

He ran back to the house, not saying a word to Belinda. He emptied out their money-boxes, took all the pennies and sixpences, left two ha'pennies in Belinda's box, and counted up to see if he had three shillings. He had. He carried it to Miss Hall. She took it and counted it too.

"That's right," she said. "Now perhaps that will be a lesson to you not to be careless in future."

Poor Billy-Bob and Belinda! They sat under the old apple tree and cried. Yes, even Billy-Bob cried, because he had nothing in his money-box to spend on the mug for Mother's birthday. Belinda didn't like to see Billy-Bob crying, because

They sat under the old apple tree and cried.

he hardly ever did. Mother found them there and was most astonished. She put her arms round them at once.

"Mother, oh, Mother, we can't buy you the mug we wanted to," sobbed Belinda. "We broke Miss Hall's window and we had to pay her three shillings for it."

"Well, darling, never mind," said Mother. "If you break things you must pay for them. You can give me a kiss and a hug for my birthday."

But that didn't please Billy-Bob and Belinda at all. The day before Mother's birthday they looked at one another gloomily.

"We can buy a penny card with my two ha'pennies," said Belinda.

"I'd rather chalk a card for Mother myself," said Billy-Bob, and he went to get his chalks. Belinda got hers too, and they both chalked cards. Billy-Bob drew an engine and chalked that. Belinda drew a rabbit.

It was whilst they were chalking that Billy-Bob had his good idea.

"Belinda!" he said. "I'm going to pick my two ripe plums and give them to Mother! And I'm going to pick my three beautiful red rose-buds and give them to her too."

"But you were going to eat your own plums," said Belinda, surprised. "And you said you didn't want to pick your roses."

"Well, I've changed my mind," said

"And I'm going to pick my three beautiful red rose-buds and give them to her too."

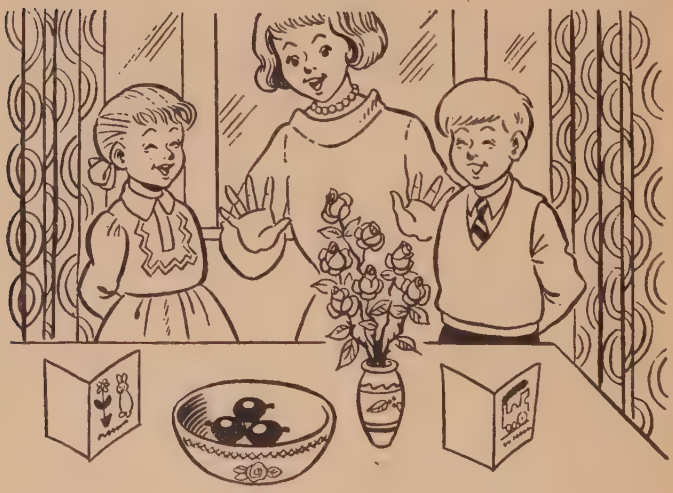
Billy-Bob. "I feel very happy now, Belinda. It's nice to give Mother what I badly wanted myself!"

Belinda didn't think it was quite so nice. It took her a long time to think she would give Mother her roses and her one plum too. She had so much looked forward to tasting that plum, and to smelling her roses at night.

The next day Mother had a most wonderful surprise! On the breakfast-

table were two nicely chalked cards, a vase with seven perfect rose-buds in, and a dish with three ripe plums! She stared at them all in wonder and delight.

"The nicest birthday presents you



"They are the best presents I've ever had."

could have given me!" she said. "The very nicest! If you *knew* how I longed to taste your lovely plums—and now they are mine! And I have never seen such beautiful rose-buds! And these cards are far nicer than any bought ones!"

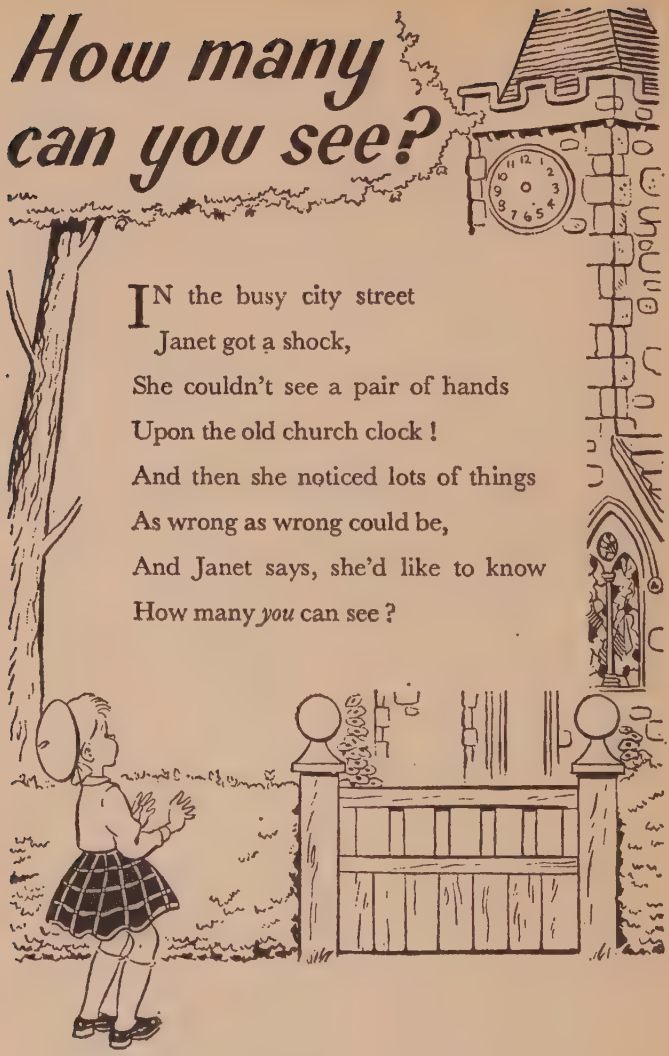
" Are they really, Mother ? " said Billy-Bob in delight. " Then it doesn't matter that we hadn't any money to spend on you, does it ? "

" Oh, I'd rather have love spent on me than money any day ! " cried Mother, hugging him and Belinda. " Anybody has money to spend—but only the nicest people spend love ! You've given me the things you loved yourselves, and they are the best presents I've ever had. Even nicer than the brooch you gave me with ' Mother ' on it."

Well, wasn't that lucky ? You can't think how pleased Billy-Bob and Belinda were. " It's a good thing we had plenty of love to spend ! " said Belinda to Billy-Bob. " We might not have had thought of these things if we hadn't."

The plums tasted delicious. Mother made them taste each one with her. The flowers are on her dressing-table, and the cards are on the mantelpiece. They *do* look nice.

How many can you see?



IN the busy city street
Janet got a shock,
She couldn't see a pair of hands
Upon the old church clock!
And then she noticed lots of things
As wrong as wrong could be,
And Janet says, she'd like to know
How many *you* can see?

S
W
N
E
TOBACCO
ONE-WAY ST.
SWEETS
EGYPT
BRITISH RAILWAYS
G.P.O.

MICHAEL'S TAIL

ALMOST exciting letter had come from the brownies in the wood to the toys in Michael's nursery. This is what it said.

> DEAR NURSERY ANIMALS,—We are holding a party for all toy animals in the woods at midnight to-morrow. Please come.—Love from,
>
> THE BROWNIES.
>
> *P.S.*—By animals we mean those with tails.

"Oh! A party in the woods just for toy animals! What a wonderful idea," said the clockwork mouse.

"I shall wear my best blue bow," said the pink cat.

"I shall put a special wag in my tail," said the black dog.

"I shall practise climbing so that I can climb the trees," said the monkey.

"And I shall make sure my growl is in good order, so that I can make the brownies laugh," said the teddy bear.

The pink cat looked at him. "You can't go to the party," she said.

"Don't be silly," said the bear. "Of course I can go. I'm an animal! Bears are always animals."

"Yes, but you haven't got a tail," said the pink cat. "You saw what it said in the note. 'By animals we mean those with tails.'"

The bear stared behind him in alarm. "Haven't I got a tail?" he said. "Why haven't I got a tail?"

"I don't know. I don't believe teddy bears ever have tails," said the pink cat.

"Anyway, you can't go. It plainly says that only those with tails can go."

"But it didn't mean *I* can't go," said the bear. "Why, everyone knows I'm an animal! I can't help it if I haven't got a tail. It just means that people like the golliwog or the sailor doll can't go. It doesn't mean bears."

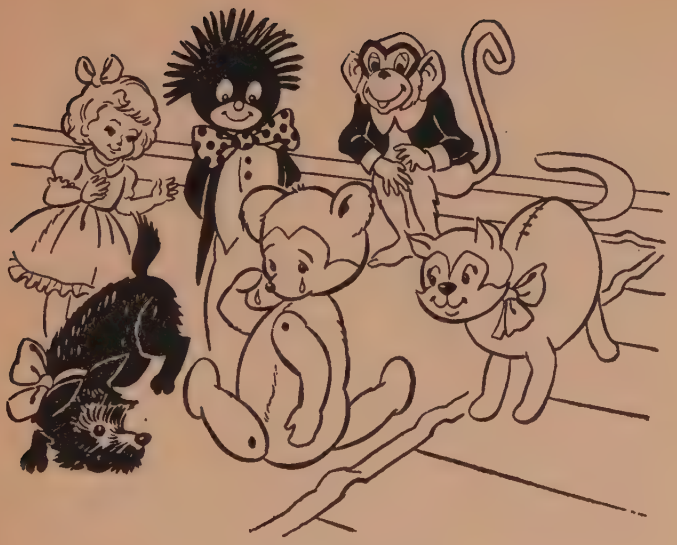
"Well, I'm sure it *does*," said the black dog. "They think you're a toy, like the golliwog. They don't count you as an animal. You can't possibly go, Teddy. They might turn you back."

The bear began to cry. He did like parties so very much. "Oh, don't go without me! I couldn't bear it," he sobbed. "Please, please let me go with you. Don't go without me."

The toys were sorry for him. He was a nice bear, kind and jolly. It was a shame he couldn't go because he had no tail.

Then the monkey had an idea. "I know! Can't he get a tail? Then he could go!"

"Oh, yes, oh, yes! I'll get a tail!"



The bear began to cry.

cried the bear, and wiped his eyes at once. He gave the monkey a hug. "How kind of you to think of such a good idea! Where can I get a tail?"

Nobody knew. Then the black dog remembered something he had heard Michael say. (Michael was the little boy who lived in the nursery and played with the toys.)

"I once heard Michael say that his

favourite tail was in that book over there," he said, and he pointed to a book on the book-shelf. The toys stared in surprise.

"I didn't know Michael had a tail," said the bear.

"He hasn't," said the toy boat. "I swim in the bath with him, and I know he hasn't got a tail. He has a dear little pink fat body, but no tail."

"Well, he keeps it in that book, I tell you," said the black dog. "He must have two or three tails, and that is his favourite one, the one in the book."

"Are you *sure* you heard him say his favourite tail was in that book?" said the monkey.

"Yes. Quite, quite sure," said the black dog impatiently. "I've got two good ears, haven't I?"

"Well, then, we've only got to look through the book and borrow the tail when we find it," said the pink cat. "I should think it would be a bit squashed, but that won't matter."

They got the book down.

So they got the book down and began to hunt through it. But they couldn't find any tail at all. And this wasn't surprising, because what Michael had meant, of course, was that his favourite story or *tale* was in that book—but the black dog had quite thought he meant a waggy tail, like the one he wore himself.

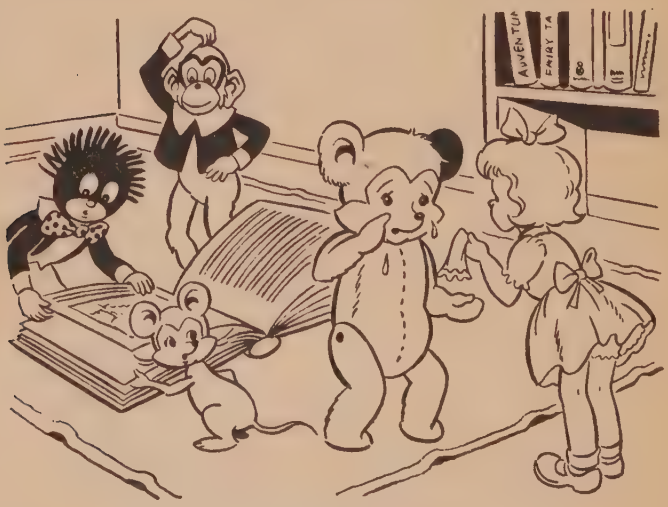
It was very disappointing. There was no tail there at all. They turned all the pages over again very carefully. Still no tail.

"Michael must have taken it out," said the monkey. The bear looked very sad. He rubbed his paw over his eyes, and the curly-haired doll gave him her hanky.

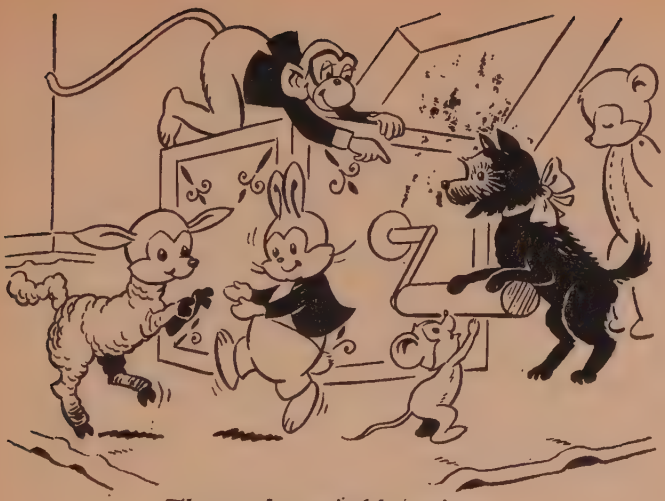
"Don't cry," she said. "Maybe Michael has put it somewhere else. We'll look."

But they couldn't find a tail anywhere, of course. The bear was very sad that night, and very sad all the next day.

When the night of the party came he was sadder still. It would be dreadful to



"Don't cry," she said.



They set the musical box going.

watch the toys going off to the party without him. If only, only he had a tail. Then he would be counted as an animal.

"Shall we set the musical box going, just to practise a dance or two before we go?" said the monkey. "I've rather forgotten my dance steps."

So they set the musical box going, and began to dance. The bear stood near, watching sadly. If only he was going to dance at a party, too!

The toys had forgotten to shut the door.

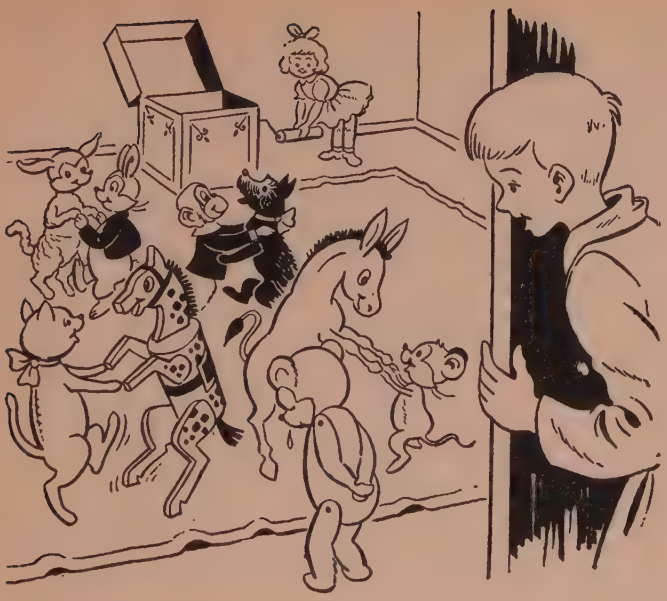
Michael awoke when he heard the music from the musical box. He sat up in bed in surprise. Who was playing the musical box in the middle of the night?

He jumped out of bed to see. He put his head in at the nursery door, and watched the toy animals dancing together. The monkey danced with the dog. The cat danced with the toy horse. The donkey danced with the mouse. The rabbit danced with the little toy lamb.

Only the bear didn't dance. He stood near the door, his back to Michael, and tears ran down his face. He turned away to hide them—and Michael saw that his dear old teddy was crying.

"What's the matter?" he said to the bear, and all the toys and animals jumped in great surprise. They shot back into the toy cupboard at top speed. Only the bear stayed where he was, and looked at Michael.

"Why are you crying, Teddy?" said Michael, and picked up the soft little bear.



He watched the toy animals dancing together.

" I've never seen you cry before. I didn't know you could."

" Michael—you said your favourite tail was in that book, but it isn't," said the bear. " Where do you keep your tails? Could you lend me one? "

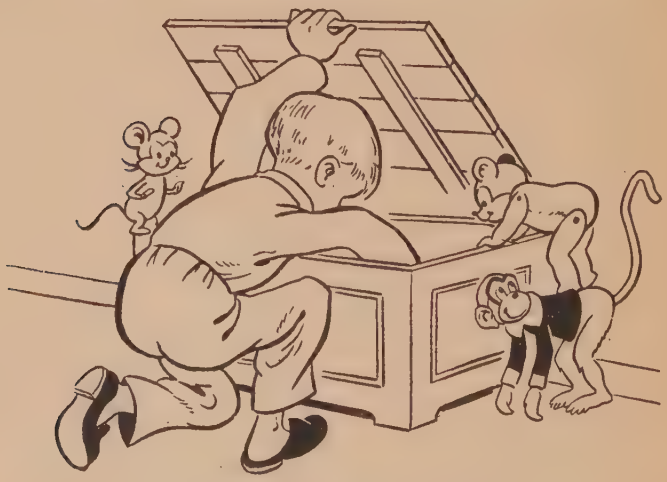
Michael couldn't understand at first. Then he guessed the funny mistake that the bear had made and he laughed.

"You've muddled up what I meant!" he said. "I meant that my favourite story was in that book, silly! I have no tails—not the sort that grow on you."

"Oh, dear," said the bear sadly. "I see. So you can't lend me one. And I can't possibly go to the party."

"What party?" said Michael, surprised. The bear told him all about it.

"Well, fancy saying that only animals with tails can go! I'm sure that's a mistake," said Michael. "But never mind



Michael went to find the old hat.

—let's see what I can find for you in the way of a tail. I'm sure I can think of something."

He remembered an old hat of his mother's. It had a little tail of white fur in front. He could take that off and sew it on the bear! That would make a most wonderful tail for him.

Michael went to find the old hat. It was in a box in the chest on the landing. Mother had often said she didn't think she could ever wear it again. Michael took it out—and there was the little white tail, just as he remembered it. Good!

He ripped it off. Then he found a needle and cotton in Mother's work-basket and he threaded the needle.

"Shall I hurt you if I sew this on to your back?" he asked the bear.

"Oh, no," said the bear. "What a simply lovely tail! It looks so real! Shall I be able to wag it?"

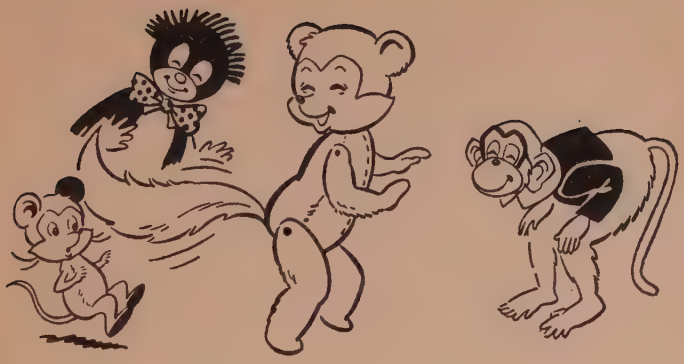
"I don't know," said Michael, feeling rather doubtful. "It hasn't a wag in it at

He sewed the white tail firmly on.

the moment. Now, keep still. It doesn't match your brown fur, but never mind!"

He sewed the white tail firmly on to the bear's back. He broke off the cotton and gave the bear a little push. "There you are! Turn round and show the others. You look really fine!"

The bear was so proud that he couldn't stand still. He strutted up and down, showing off his grand white tail. It was a bit big for him and didn't match his fur. But he was so very happy about it. His happiness suddenly got into the tail, and it began to swing about.



He swung his new tail.

"It's got a wag! Look, it's got a wag!" said the bear happily, and he swung his new tail so well that he hit the clockwork mouse on the nose.

"It's time to start," said the black dog, as he heard the clock in the hall strike a quarter to twelve. "Good-bye, Michael. Thank you for your help."

"Have a nice time!" said Michael, and went back to bed, delighted at his little midnight adventure. The animals all set off to the party. The bear didn't feel a bit afraid of being turned back now that

he had a tail. He swung it about all the time.

To his surprise there were other teddy bears there—without tails! The brownies explained their mistake, and welcomed all the bears that came.

"We forgot that teddy bears didn't have tails. We are so glad you came."

"*Well!* I needn't have gone to all this bother of getting myself a tail after all!" said the bear, feeling rather cross. But he didn't feel cross long.

You see, there was a special prize offered for the best tail—and the teddy bear won it! His was such a big and surprising tail that everyone voted it was the very best one. So he got the prize.

It was a fine prize. It was a box of chocolates—and each chocolate was a little brown bear! Wasn't that lovely? The bear ate one and handed the box round.

"I must keep a few for Michael," he thought. "I really must." So he did.

He put them on Michael's pillow, and Michael found them in the morning.

"I suppose the bear brought them home for me from the party," thought Michael, eating them. "How kind of him! I must take his tail off to-day and put it back on Mummy's hat."

But the bear didn't want to part with his beautiful new tail; so Michael asked his mother if she minded him keeping the tail off her old hat. She didn't: so Michael let the bear keep it.

He still wears it, so you will know him if ever you see him. He must be the only teddy bear in the world with a proper tail!

ANSWERS TO PROVERBS ON PAGE 61.

1. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
   Half a loaf is better than no bread.
2. Great minds think alike.
   Let sleeping dogs lie.
3. Too many cooks spoil the broth.
   Coming events cast their shadows before.
4. Pride goes before a fall.
   A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
5. Look before you leap.
   You can take a horse to water but you cannot make him drink.
6. Birds of a feather flock together.
   Make hay while the sun shines.
7. Half a loaf is better than no bread.
   Every cloud has a silver lining.
8. It's no good locking the stable door when the horse has gone.
   Make hay while the sun shines.

Goodnight!

MOTHER said,
"It's time for you to go to bed."
And so you put your toys away
And stopped your play.
You went upstairs,
And cleaned your teeth and said your prayers,
You had your bath and jumped in bed,
And then you read
A tale or two,
Till Mother came and peeped at you,
Tucked you up, turned out the light,
And said goodnight.
And now *I'll* peep
To see if you are fast asleep—
I'll whisper, hoping you can hear—
Goodnight, my dear!